

IN THESE TIMES

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50 Cents



Photo by Jane Melnick

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THE INSIDE STORY

JOHN JUDIS



'New Democrat' Floyd J. Fithian.

From Washington with gloom and confusion

I went to Washington last month to discover whether Jimmy Carter was really as ineffective and confused as he seemed or whether there was some higher wisdom guiding his efforts. I didn't learn much that was new. I heard the word "inept" used more times in conjunction with Carter's name than his given name of "Jimmy." And if his administration has a plan, no one on Capitol Hill was aware of it.

But in talking with aides, lobbyists, and House members from the Democratic left, I found the subject shifting away from Carter toward Congress. In 1974, labor and its allies had sought a "veto-proof" congress against Gerry Ford, and in numerical terms almost got it. In 1976, they got a two-to-one Democratic majority in the House and a Democratic president, a legislative utopia.

But the 95th Congress has been the Gerald Ford memorial Congress. It has defeated bills that he formerly had to veto, and adopted measures whose passage he vainly sought.

Several people I talked to blamed Congress' newfound Republicanism on Carter's inability to use patronage, public works, and election threats to convince wavering legislators to back his measures. Others cited the onslaught against labor and consumer-backed bills from the Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers and the Business Roundtable. And most agreed that labor's influence on Capitol Hill is on the decline.

But everyone kept returning to Congress itself, which, I was reminded, does not simply register the influence of a weak president, weakened labor movement, and strong business lobby. Its decisions also reflect the views of the legislators themselves and of their active constituencies.

In this respect, I was told, a new breed of northern

Democratic legislator in Congress has provided the margin of defeat again and again for labor-consumer-feminist-minority backed legislation.

Consumer bill debacle.

I arrived in Washington just after the defeat of the consumer protection agency bill. Like the common situs picketing bill, which the House defeated last year, the consumer agency bill had been passed by previous congresses, but was not sent to the president because congressional leaders did not think they could override a veto.

The new bill was weaker than the ones Congress had passed—the agency was barred from agriculture and small business—but it lost 227 to 189 in the House.

Business lobbying unquestionably played a role in the bill's defeat. "I have never seen such extensive lobbying," House Speaker O'Neill exclaimed before the vote. And while the bill's supporters acknowledged Carter's sincere efforts on its behalf, they also chided him for ineffectiveness. "I don't know of a single vote he changed," one lobbyist told me. But for whatever reason—Carter's ineffectiveness or business pressure—it was 35 northern "new Democrats" whose votes defeated the bill.

These Democrats have certain common characteristics.

Most come from districts that voted for Gerald Ford in 1976, and all of them ran ahead of Carter.

Several won office in 1974 or 1976 on the anti-Watergate vote in districts that normally elect Republicans.

Many are from suburban, white collar, non-union, and predominantly white districts.

Unlike the old machine Democrats, their relation to their constituencies is not mediated by organizations, but is direct—through modern communication techniques. They rely for support on newsletters, frequent visits home, town meetings, regular TV and radio spots, and efficient processing of their constituents' problems with government. At election time, they campaign through the media.

They do take business seriously as an organized interest because it provides the funds for media campaigns.

Politically, they run on "good government" anti-Watergate issues rather than traditional bread and butter issues. They tend to be "fiscal conservatives" rather than "liberal spenders." To the extent they identify with Carter, they do so on anti-corruption, anti-big government, and human rights issues.

But given their districts, they are largely independent of Carter and see him more as a potential liability than an asset to their re-election.

"Another layer of bureaucracy."

Indiana Democratic Congressman Floyd J. Fithian is typical of this group. Fithian comes from largely suburban northwest Indiana. He was elected to the House in 1974 against Republican Earl Landgrebe, one of Richard Nixon's most steadfast supporters. (Landgrebe was famous for saying to reporters, "Don't confuse me with facts. I've got a closed mind. I will not vote for impeachment.")

But Fithian had a tougher race in 1976, and his district went for Ford over Carter 61 to 39 percent.

Like other new Democrats, his ADA and COPE ratings have steadily declined since 1974. Warren Stickle, his legislative aide, explained to me that Fithian opposed the agency because "it would add another layer of bureaucracy to the federal government. It would also cost money, interfere with members of the business community, and result in higher costs for the consumer."

Other "new Democrats" with a background similar to Stickle's include California's Leo Ryan, Kansas' Martha Keys, Colorado's Patricia Schroeder, Iowa's Berkeley Bedell, and Washington's Don Bonker.

Humphrey-Hawkins in trouble.

The next test in the House for left Democrats and for the loose alliance of consumer, minority, feminist, and labor interests will be the Humphrey-Hawkins bill (H.R. 50), which was reported out of the liberal Labor and Education Committee and will probably come up for a vote next week.

In the wake of the consumer agency's defeat, most H.R. 50 supporters now expect to lose in the House. One more optimistic lobbyist thought it might pass the House, but would surely be defeated in the Senate.

Here again history is moving backwards. The previous version of Humphrey-Hawkins, which required the president to bring unemployment down to 4 percent, had 100 House co-sponsors. This substantially weaker version, which allows the president to plead inflation, has only 70. The bill's supporters can count no more than 200 potential votes in the House.

The bill's lack of required objectives has helped it with neither the right nor the left. One lobbyist told me she was having trouble generating enthusiasm among liberal House members. "Why should we work for such a weak bill?" they asked her.

Among the new Democrats and Republicans, another lobbyist told me, "the fact that the bill is not specific is a two-edged sword. You can develop goblins out of it. You can impute big government to it."

There is probably a term in military strategy for the corner that the Black Caucus and labor have gotten themselves boxed into with this bill. Having agreed in negotiations with Carter to the weak compromise version, they are committed to its passage and see its defeat as a defeat for any future government commitment to full employment. "H.R. 50 is the tip of the iceberg," Congressman John Conyers told me. "If we don't pass it, it won't come up for a decade. The issue of full employment will be buried."

Thus, if it loses, as now seems likely, the cause of full employment will be devastated. But if it wins, its backers will have scored an ideological, but not a programmatic victory. The conservatives who see Humphrey-Hawkins as a step toward Soviet collectivism (I met two who told me this) will be shaken, but the Carter administration can continue to juggle percentages on the tip of its budget.

And even if the Carter administration decided to propose spending plans that would make good H.R. 50's commitment to full employment, there seems to be little chance, with the new Democrats in office, that Congress would accept such a proposal.

Needed: a new politics.

The rise of the new Democrats and the growing isolation of left Democrats comes from the same source: the devastation that a continued world recession has wrought on traditional Democratic programs and policies.

With their standard of living constantly in jeopardy, the new Democrats' constituents simply will not support increased government spending unless it aids them directly. On some issues, like the consumer agency, new Democrats and their business allies exploit this sentiment, but in other cases, they simply reflect it.

Nebraska Congressman John J. Cavanaugh's constituency simply does not want to foot the bill for New York City's problems.

Many of the left Democrats represent constituencies for whom federal spending is a necessity rather than a curse: the unemployed, the citydwellers of the Northeast and Midwest, minorities, blue collar workers threatened with layoffs.

The conflicting needs of these various constituencies lie at the heart of left's dilemma in Congress. It will be solved only by a politics and programmatic approach capable of uniting these divided constituencies in a new electoral coalition.

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Mining women stand firm

By Deborah M. Baker

WILLIAMSON, W. VA.

THE WORLD OF PRESIDENTIAL press conferences ordinarily seems far away from the living room of the house on a steep hillside in Delbarton, W. Va. where Jean and George White, a local United Mine Workers union president, live with their two children. But for the past few weeks the two worlds have strangely dovetailed.

Jean White watched intently as the special TV news bulletin broke into the regular programming: President Carter would announce later that night formal federal intervention in the 81-day-old national coal strike. "He might as well not even try to invoke Taft Hartley," said the young miner's wife firmly. "They won't go back under it."

"As far as I'm concerned, if anything's done, it should be done to the coal operators, not miners and their families," she added. "That big rock there, the BCOA, is what needs to be whittled down."

In the West Virginia coalfields last week the prospect of an end to the longest United Mine Workers strike in history was a relief to many families. But to many of the women who have staunchly supported the strike one thing was also clear: despite the hardship of striking through the snowiest winter in memory, despite the mounting pressure of bills paid late or not at all, no back-to-work movement was worth living through three years of a bad contract.

"It's not just today—you have to look at it long term," said Jean White. "You'd rather give up three or four months now and come out with a contract you can live under. And we're not asking for the moon. Just something that's liveable."

Bred into you.

The daughter of a miner, Jean White grew up in Delbarton, W. Va., knowing that miners "always fought for everything they got." Strikes were an accepted part of that battle. "When you're growing up, you pretty well know that when strike time comes, it's time to cut down—it's sort of born and bred in you, being in a mining town."

When Jean talks about the UMW it's always "we." "That union involves me and other wives—even though we're not members—as much as it does our husbands. Because it's our livelihood, too."

She is angered by the implication that jumps out at her daily from newspaper headlines and the TV screen that miners are to blame for the prolonged strike. "People talk as though it's their fault. They're gonna lay this guy off here, put people out of work there...but all we ask is a contract to work under, to support families. Some of these companies are downright dirty. They want the coal out of the mines but if they want to walk on the miners they will. The operators weren't even concerned enough about the people who give them the coal—and their families—to agree to what they had in the '74 contract."

"Miners are the ones getting this commodity out of the hills, why shouldn't they share in that profit?"

Wages are not Jean White's first concern in a contract, however. She worries more about restored medical benefits, equalized and guaranteed pensions for retirees and not losing ground on safety measures such as requiring helpers on certain pieces of equipment. "That's how my father got hurt—his helper left the machine.... When George goes out that door to go to work at three o'clock, I don't know if I'm gonna hear him come up that road at midnight."

We do have some power.

A dozen miles away in Rawl Shelley Van Hoose visited her mother and did a load of wash in the house where she grew up, the third generation in a coal mining family. The fourth generation, 20-month-old Wally, zoomed around the room while



Job rights to miner Linda Thompson means the boss can't cuss you out.

his mother talked about the strike.

"I think it's just sort of showing that miners do have an effect on the country," she said. "You know, if you go in a store here, you're looked down on because you're a miner. And miners' kids are treated differently in school. I've been through that—I know. But I think they're showing the country they do have a say right now, they do have some power."

The Van Hooses tried their best to prepare for the strike. "But we didn't realize it was going to go this long and it's getting kind of skimpy. We've got to watch everything we do," she said.

Preparations were complicated by the fact that Shelley, her husband Wally and their two children were victims of an April 1977 flood that devastated the Tug River Valley along the West Virginia-Kentucky border. They lost everything they had as their brand new "dream house" was destroyed by the raging river.

The disaster also made for a short work year for 26 year old Wally, an electrician, since the mine where he worked was also flooded and shut down for three months. He had been back at work only two weeks when miners walked off the job to protest

cutbacks in medical benefits and he was out for another two-and-a-half months.

The Van Hooses declared bankruptcy—the only way they could figure to deal with payments on a house that no longer existed—and bought a trailer with federal disaster grant money. Filing bankruptcy actually helped in dealing with the strike, Shelly noted—at least there was no house debt to cope with.

Still, the family must cut corners. "You can't have anything but necessities—and some of them you don't get." With no union strike fund and little chance for earning other income, most mining families have applied for food stamps, which provide the Van Hooses with about \$175 worth of food a month. But the stamps don't cover necessities like toilet articles and cleaning supplies.

Families are an important source of support in the current situation, said Shelley. "You hate to but sometimes you have to lean on somebody." In this case it's her parents, Allene and Paul Chalfa, also on strike.

For the Chalfas, the strike has meant dipping into savings to pay for medical expenses. Replenishing their nest egg may

mean that Paul Chalfa, who had hoped to retire this year after 40 years as a miner, will have to postpone his retirement and work a little longer.

Allene Chalfa spent a week in the hospital recently, and without the UMW medical card—which covers doctor and hospital visits and most medication—the cost to the family was \$1,000. Her husband, injured in the mines in 1974, has to have checkups every few months and now must pay for those. "It's hard without a medical card," said Shelley. "That's the roughest thing for miners right now."

Despite the difficulties, they see the strike as worth it. "If we didn't have a union, the miners wouldn't have anything," said Shelley. "My grandfather worked to get the union in here—at a time when he worked in the mines from daylight till dark for 50 cents a day."

"I think if nothing else the union might come out of this a little bit stronger," she added. "It seems like they're sticking together this time. They're really fighting for a cause. If they get a good contract, maybe more people will want to join."

The right to speak up.

Coal miner Linda Thompson was piecing together a pinwheel-patterned quilt—her first. "I got bored," she grinned, "so I decided to try it. I'd been looking at books about it for six months, and buying the material half a yard at a time."

One of a handful of women at a U.S. Steel mine at Thacker, W. Va., she works the hoot owl (midnight to 8 a.m.) shift as a utility person at the preparation plant. "It's an extremely hazardous mine—bad top—and when I got that tippie job I was tickled to death to get outside. But it's cold up there—Lord, it's cold."

She went in the mines two years ago to support herself and her husband, a disabled World War II veteran. "I had worked in dress shops for minimum wage and if the boss didn't like you, you didn't get a raise." She has a secretarial science degree, "but I hated office work. And in an office you can't say 'hey, you're discriminating against me.' But in the mines, you can."

Getting through her first strike has meant "not paying any unnecessary bills whatsoever. We've been very frugal with electricity, and the landlady's been real good about the rent—but no car payments or anything like that. And I've borrowed some money from my family."

"I think the reason miners are surviving this is that we've seen so much—we're all used to hard times. The good times are rare down through here."

I think we're staying out for a good reason, and there's more unity than there's been in many a year. I don't want so much more money; I don't even mind paying a deductible on our medical care. But I would like to see better benefits, definitely a cost of living provision and more job rights."

To Linda Thompson job rights means "when a boss can't stand up and cuss me, or because he's mad at me give me a dirty job. One night my boss asked me to clean the bathroom. I told him I didn't use it, I wasn't gonna clean it. He said 'Are you refusing work?' I said 'that has nothing to do with my work.'"

With little information at hand about provisions of the proposed new contract miners were uncertain last week about the outcome of the ratification vote. But one thing was clear to Linda; federal intervention in the form of Taft-Hartley won't work. "They're wasting their breath," she smiled. "They may put us to work, but there'll be no coal put out."

Jean White describes the backbone of the three-month long coal strike as "ordinary, everyday people willing to do without—to let people know this union is here." Women in the southern West Virginia coalfields attest to that fact daily. The reason is simple. "To me," says Jean White, "without the union, there's no future."

Deborah M. Baker is a free-lance writer in West Virginia.

Uncertain fate for settlement of longest mine strike

By Dan Marschall

COAL INDUSTRY NEGOTIATORS, threatened with "drastic action" by the federal government and a possible collapse of national bargaining, accepted an industry-wide settlement with the United Mine Workers union based on an independent agreement with the Pittsburgh & Midway Coal Co.

The Feb. 24 settlement, which faces uncertain approval by UMW members, came hours before President Carter was scheduled to appear on national television to invoke the Taft-Hartley Act and send legislation to Congress allowing federal seizure of the mines. In a prepared statement, Carter praised the miners' "historic struggle" and urged them to accept the pact because it "serves the national interest."

The operators capitulated after a variety of governmental and political pres-

ures. The Carter administration had reportedly threatened to declare a "bargaining impasse," which would allow member companies of the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) to withdraw and negotiate separate contracts with the union. Press reports suggested that a "substantial" number of the companies were prepared to "peel off," thereby severely undercutting the BCOA's bargaining clout.

To further increase the pressure on the industry Carter met with the governors of Pennsylvania, Kentucky and West Virginia, who issued "stern warnings" to the operators about the implications of continued intransigence. (Carter earlier obtained bipartisan support from Congressional leaders for legislation to seize the mines.)

Carter's final move was a last-minute meeting with the executives of five of the most powerful corporations in the BCOA.

Continued on page 6.

HEALTH

New regulations attack improper sterilizations

By Lauren Crawford, Jenny Knauss, and Kathy Mallin

FEDERAL OFFICIALS HAVE NOT been "nearly meticulous enough" in preventing overzealous doctors, social workers, mental institution and prison officials from forcing women to undergo sterilization operations, HEW Secretary Joseph Califano charged last December. Saying that there was no way to know how many women had been sterilized unwittingly in recent years, Califano proposed new standards governing all sterilization procedures paid for by Medicaid, the Public Health Service and the department's family planning programs.

Public hearings were scheduled for Washington and ten cities around the country. Women's groups in Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco and the other cities suddenly found their testimony solicited by HEW officials, many of whom had been anxiously fending off public comment from the same groups on Medicaid funding for abortions during the summer and fall.

In announcing the new regulations Califano cited a June Government Accounting Office report on sterilizations performed by the Indian Health Service that had recommended substantial strengthening of procedures after discovering that more than 3,400 Indian women had been sterilized by the IHS in a four-year period.

This had been followed in September by a U.S. Court of Appeals decision that conceded that HEW had the authority to set standards of "voluntariness" for sterilizations paid for with federal funds.

HEW currently pays for approximately 100,000 sterilizations a year—10 percent of all sterilizations in the nation—with little enforceable regulation. Almost all the women sterilized are poor; minority groups are significantly overrepresented. For example, in 1972, 37 percent of patients in federally funded family planning programs were black, while 43 percent of sterilization patients were black.

Sterilization abuse occurs whenever an individual is forced to choose sterilization because his or her social and economic position leaves no other option.

Groups like the Committee to End Sterilization Abuse in New York and the Coalition for the Medical Rights of Women in San Francisco have focused considerable public attention on the problem of sterilization abuse in recent years. The present ban on federal payments for abortion has focused additional attention. Federal funds will still reimburse 90 percent of the cost of sterilization for eligible women, encouraging the sterilization of poor women.

Public pressure has clearly had an impact on HEW. While the American Medical Association and the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology have criticized aspects of the proposed regulations as an intrusion on the physician's medical decision-making powers and the doctor-patient relationship, little resistance to the guidelines as a whole is expected. Vocal elements in the women's movement, data from the Naderite Health Research Group and the American Civil Liberties Union, and pending lawsuits all have added to the pressure on HEW.

The proposed legislation would require that:

- the patient sign a consent form in her/his primary language;
- the physician certify that she/he has

Women's and community groups have focused attention on sterilization abuses, and this has obviously had some impact on the new regulations issued by HEW.

fully informed the patient of the risks, benefits and alternatives to sterilization;

- the patient understand that no loss of welfare or other funds would follow refusal of sterilization;

- there be a 30-day waiting period between the signing of consent forms and performance of the operation;

- sterilizations not be performed on persons under 21;

- the use of hysterectomies solely for purposes of birth control be banned.

The guidelines also propose alternative procedures for the sterilization of those deemed mentally incompetent: one would continue an outright ban on the procedure for those individuals unable to give an informed consent; the other would establish special committees and court reviews to pass on the cases of those individuals.

Most of the women's and community groups testifying at the public hearings greeted the proposed regulations as an advance, but addressed specific shortcomings as well as the need to back the guidelines with a strong system of monitoring and enforcement.

Raised repeatedly was the necessity of developing a comprehensive and well-enforced approach to the informed consent process. This might include prohibiting solicitation of consent during childbirth or abortion and requiring multi-lingual education materials and counseling.

Several groups called for a rigorous system of data collection that would allow analysis of broad patterns of sterilization and specific institutional abuse.

Involvement of community and women's organizations in programs of patient advocacy and on review and monitoring committees were also suggested as



HEW held regional hearings on the new regulations. Above: a Chicago nurse testifies in favor of stronger regulation.

important in effective enforcement of the guidelines.

Controversy at the hearings in Chicago and in some other cities centered around groups that saw the regulations as "restrictive" and an infringement on individual freedom and the right to choose. These included the Association for Voluntary Sterilization, Zero Population Growth and similar population control groups. One Chicago physician, for example, said, "If you are affluent, intelligent, competent and would be a good parent to an unplanned child, you will have little trouble getting sterilized. [under the proposed rules]. If, on the other hand, you are poor, incompetent, incapacitated or otherwise unfit for parenthood, very likely you will not be eligible for voluntary sterilization."

Some press accounts, picking up on such statements, linked proponents of strong sterilization regulations with Right to Life and other groups opposing abortion. "This is a grossly distorted analysis," responded one Chicago health activist. "The women's movement concept of a woman's right to control her own body is being improperly applied to this situation, without an understanding of the race and class use of sterilization."

Overall, however, participating groups felt that the public hearings were positive and useful, providing an opportunity for a number of women's minority and community groups to consolidate ties and to gain a public forum.

Lauren Crawford, Jenny Knauss and Kathy Mallin are members of the Chicago Women's Health Task Force.

Teaching hospitals violate guidelines

A recent survey conducted by the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), a New York-based legal and educational organization, has revealed that many of the major teaching hospitals in the U.S. are violating one or more of the current guidelines governing sterilization set by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

In a letter to HEW Secretary Joseph Califano, CCR attorney Nancy Stearns called the findings "extremely disturbing" and urged that a special monitoring system for teaching hospitals be established to insure that they comply with the federal guidelines.

HEW sterilization guidelines were developed to protect against the frequent occurrence of "sterilization abuse"—where women have agreed to sterilizations without being informed of the consequences, or under threat that if they don't consent to sterilization, medical services will be denied or government benefits cut off. To guard against this, the guidelines establish requirements for voluntary and informed consent and a

72-hour waiting period between signature and procedure. They also require that all consent forms clearly state that a woman will not lose government benefits if she decides not to be sterilized.

However the results of the CCR survey showed that:

- 58 percent of the hospitals that responded to the survey obtained consent for sterilization operations at the time of admission for abortions;
- one-third obtained consent during labor;

- 60 percent reported no minimum age for sterilization, although HEW guidelines set the minimum age at 21;
- 30 percent use consent forms that do not include the notice informing patients that a decision not to be sterilized will not jeopardize government benefits.

"Women are not being told what it's all about," Beth Bochnak of CCR said. And in her letter to Califano CCR's attorney Nancy Stearns emphasized, "Teaching hospitals should be among the best equipped to conform to federal policies of informed consent. As teach-

ing hospitals, not only are they setting the standards for current medical practices, but they are also molding the attitudes and practices of this nation's future generation. We are shocked to find that our future physicians are being trained to disregard the requirements of informed consent established by HEW, particularly in an area as fundamental as one's reproductive ability."

CCR sent questionnaires about the HEW guidelines to 365 teaching hospitals, all chosen because they have full-time departmental chairpersons who supposedly directly control and monitor the practices of the residents and interns training at their hospitals. Of these 365 hospitals only 64 returned completed questionnaires. However, Stearns noted that in light of the degree of non-compliance by "even those hospitals which exhibited enough interest and concern to respond, it may well be safe to assume that those who did not respond are even less respectful of HEW guideline requirements."

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GRASS ROOTS

Women defend their communities

Women in working class neighborhoods have different needs. NCNW exists to articulate them.

By Stephanie Twin

WHEN JEAN KOWALSKY'S picture appeared on the cover of the New York Daily News Magazine one Sunday last August, her husband grabbed it and ran to all their neighbors exclaiming "That's my wife!"

His excitement represented a significant change from the time three years ago when he was "a little threatened" by his wife's emergence from the world of home, family and volunteerism into the realms of feminism and paid work.

Kowalsky, then 34, had spent 13 years as a homemaker, PTA activist and one-time Republican candidate for district co-leader. She had dropped out of school at age 16 and, with the \$23 after taxes that she had earned each week as a salesgirl and cashier, had "thought that I was a millionaire." Working her way up to store manager, she had quit to get married and have children.

Her second and third babies were born, she notes, as each previous sibling hit school age. By her youngest child's third birthday Kowalsky was bored at home and fed up with volunteerism.

At about the same time another woman in Kowalsky's neighborhood, Ann Giordano, was beginning "a very slow process of consciousness raising" around the issues of redlining and slum housing.

Like Kowalsky, Giordano had spent many years as a homemaker and as a church, PTA and Girl Scouts volunteer. Though she had lived in her Brooklyn community since age eight, she had been shocked recently to discover the dilapidated dwellings in which blacks and Puerto Ricans lived, as well as the government "blank wall" that greeted efforts to improve the neighborhood.

Almost simultaneously, although for different reasons—Kowalsky to be out of the house and paid, Giordano to be more effective politically—the two women began working with the National Congress of Neighborhood Women.

Working class organization.

NCNW was a new, left-leaning, working-class women's organization formed under the aegis of the National Center for Urban and Ethnic Affairs, largely because of the efforts of Brooklyn community organizer Jan Peterson (who now works for Carter aide Midge Costanza) and such other nationally-known feminists as Barbara Mikulski, now a Maryland congresswoman, and Nancy Seifer, of the American Jewish Committee and author of *Nobody Speaks for Me*.

In the Eastern European and Italian Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, where Kowalsky and Giordano live and the NCNW is located, feminism was a dirty word. An early NCNW survey on "What is a Feminist?" found residents answering "a lesbian" or "people who walk around screaming about women's rights." Neighborhood rumors that the NCNW encouraged lesbianism and divorce circulated because gay women were visible and three staff members got divorced the first year.

If Kowalsky's husband, then a watchmaker and now a transit worker, was "a little threatened," Giordano's husband, also a transit worker, was enormously so. Giordano recalls the serious razzing he suffered and the tremendous peer pressure he was under to "control" his wife.



Margaret Carnegie receives an award from the National Congress of Neighborhood Women for her outstanding volunteer work in the community. Looking on is Christine Noschese, director of NCNW.

"He never stopped me from doing anything" and probably couldn't have anyway, she now remarks.

Today Giordano is the NCNW Education Coordinator and a graduate of NCNW's neighborhood college program. Kowalsky is the organization's office manager and bookkeeper. Their husbands not only support their involvement but even enjoy being with their co-workers, Kowalsky laughs, "lesbians and all."

The fact that these two women have been able to make crucial life and political changes within a traditional home and family context tells much about NCNW—and why, less than three years after its May 1975 founding, it is one of the most successful and progressive, grass-roots organizations in the U.S.

NCNW was founded because feminist community organizers in various parts of the country believed that working-class women, who were providing so much unpaid service to their neighborhoods, had needs of their own that were being neglected.

The various community institutions dealing with men's needs—ranging from bars to civic clubs—were observed to have little interest in women's needs. And while the female-dominated community groups addressed the needs of women as mothers and homemakers, they were rarely seen to address the needs of women as women.

As a policy and project association NCNW was not established to deliver social services to working-class women. Its purpose has been to facilitate community organizing around women's issues, to encourage women in working-class neighborhoods to express their own needs and develop their own programs. Because much activity in this direction had already begun in Jan Peterson's home area of Brooklyn, the new organization was headquartered there. Also, director Christine Noschese notes, locating the national staff in the working-class Williamsburg area, rather than in "the glamour centers of Manhattan or Washington," was meant to emphasize NCNW's community power base.

National affiliates.

NCNW's almost 20 affiliates include such groups as Mothers Morning Out and Seniors Forum in Boston, Parent Advocates and Women Pro Se in Milwaukee, Wisc.,

NOW and the Puerto Rican Organization for Women in San Francisco, and Families for Action in Prichard, Ala. National staff members travel around the country exchanging program ideas with these groups.

The programs developed by the Brooklyn staff and usually funded by the federal Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA), serve as pilots for the affiliates.

The Brooklyn office currently operates a neighborhood college program in conjunction with LaGuardia Community College (ITT, Oct. 5-11, 1977), runs a battered women's shelter in conjunction with the YWCA (ITT, May 18, 1977), and hopes to establish a neighborhood law center sometime this year. It also publishes a *Neighborhood Woman* newspaper, holds frequent community speakouts, lobbies for certain items of legislation, actively supports strike activities and campaigns for the most liberal and feminist candidates.

The key to NCNW's organizing success is its commitment to the values most cherished by its working-class constituency—home, family and neighborhood.

A tendency to evaluate policy issues in terms of these values is what distinguishes working-class from middle-class women, NCNW activists feel. They believe that working-class women, who are deeply rooted to their communities, give little weight to an issue's justness in the abstract or to its desirability for a few individuals. Their interest lies in a given policy's community impact.

"Does it service the community?" is the question that working-class women instinctively ask about a policy, according to Giordano.

For example, she illustrates, the women in her neighborhood believe that mothers should not work outside the home. Thus, they view jobs for husbands as a female issue. However, Giordano continues, because the neighborhood mothers know that some of their numbers must work, they also consider day care, job training and education to be female issues.

Therefore, day care, education, housing, aging, home life and jobs for both sexes—the so-called bread-and-butter issues—are NCNW's major concerns, rather than what many members see as the more middle-class issues of gay rights, the ERA and abortion (which is a religious

taboo, though Kowalsky speculates that some members have experienced it).

Survival.

"In these communities," public relations director Rosemarie Reed observes, "women are very concerned with issues of survival. If they can't obtain what they need to survive, they'll never get to the human and civil rights issues."

A good example of the NCNW's policy orientation is the Displaced Homemakers' Act, which the organization helped secure for New York State. A displaced homemaker is an unmarried, widowed or divorced woman who has provided unpaid services while supported by another family member whose income is no longer available. Unemployed, undereducated and with grown children or children near the age of majority, this woman does not qualify (or will soon disqualify) for any of the various public assistance programs. The Centers for Displaced Homemakers mandated by the Act will provide such women with the education or job training and legal, financial and personal counseling they need to become self-sufficient.

The displaced homemakers issue is significantly different from the wages for housework movement, which the NCNW's constituency opposes. They view housework payments as merely another deduction from their husbands' already tax-eaten paychecks. In addition, as Reed points out, "Women here see housework as a labor of love," not as drudgery. "They may not like doing it," she says, but it gives them "a sense of accomplishment" based on "making their families happy, safe and loved."

As part of its effort to improve the image and status of the homemaker, NCNW held, in October, a "Speakout on Housework" which focused on the emotional aspects of homemaking. The factory loft which houses the NCNW office was packed with over 75 women, about one-third of whom were black or Hispanic, while the rest were what they themselves call "white ethnic." The women portrayed at videotaped commercials that portray housewives as glamorous and lazy or as dumb and incompetent without the right product. A sociologist then talked on the historical reasons for the

Continued on page 21.

FOCUS ON WOMEN

FBI didn't stop murder

Relatives of civil rights worker Viola Liuzzo, shot to death by a member of the Ku Klux Klan at the time of the historic 1965 civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Ala., depicted in the recent *King* TV mini-series, have filed a \$2 million claim against the FBI for its part in her murder.

Liuzzo was a Detroit white woman, a mother of five, who went south as a volunteer, driving activists to the demonstration. She was gunned down by shots from a passing car as she was driving back after the march.

The charges brought against the FBI by Liuzzo's family include failure to protect Liuzzo and withholding information. They are based on the family's recent discovery that Gary Rowe Thomas Jr., a rider in the car from which the KKK gunmen fired their shots, was an FBI informer. The suit charges that Thomas was negligent in not preventing the shooting and that the FBI is responsible for not instructing its informer to stop KKK violence.

Three KKK members were found guilty in the shooting ten years ago.

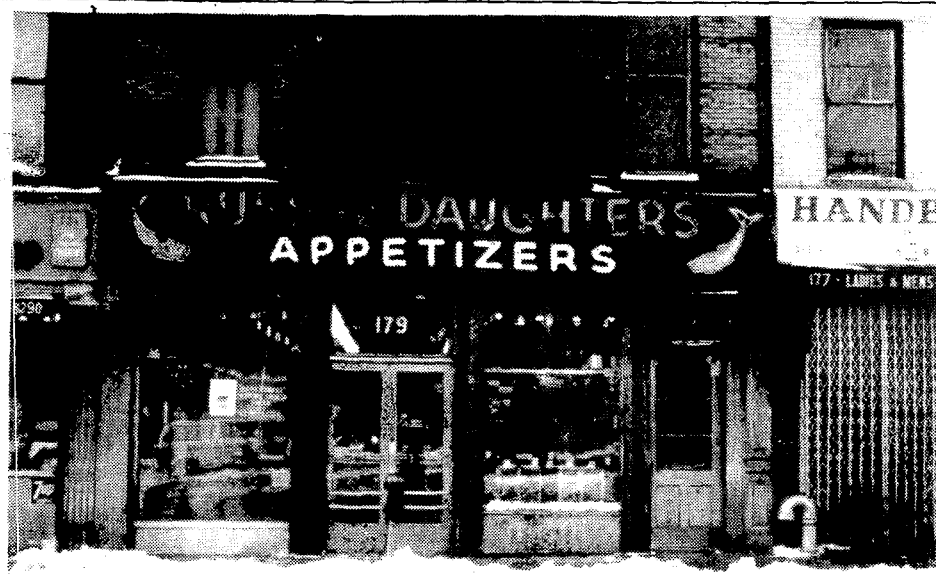
(Jet/LNS)

Carter appointments slammed

The Coalition for Women's Appointments has criticized President Carter for failing to significantly increase the number of women serving in government.

In a year-end analysis of Carter's appointment performance the Coalition cited frustration not only with the lack of women appointed to policy making positions but also with the White House's refusal to release accurate statistics on the administration's appointment record to date.

"For months we have requested reliable statistics on all appointments made by the Carter administration," said Jane McMichael, chair of the Coalition. "The only official figures we have received are for the executive level positions. We believe that the statistics on political appointments at other levels exist, but are being withheld by the White House because they document that the number of women ap-



Kathryn Grody/Michael Uhl

pointed to mid and high level positions is low."

Coalition organizations representing minority women and labor groups were especially critical of the president's performance. They also called on Congress to modify present veteran preference procedures, which unfairly block employment opportunities for women.

The Coalition pointed out that where women did the selecting—as in the case of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, headed by Eleanor Holmes Norton; the Community Services Administration; the departments of HUD and Commerce, headed by Patricia Roberts Harris and Juanita Kreps, respectively—almost 50 percent of all appointments went to women.

"These figures illustrate the importance of commitment in the appointment process," said Mildred Jeffrey of the National Women's Political Caucus. "It should not be surprising to anyone that the record of the women appointees is excellent. Their record demonstrates clearly that when there is a will there is a way—that is what we find shockingly absent among some of the male cabinet members."

The official Dec. 13, 1977 White House figures for top level positions show that out of 552 slots currently filled, 64, or 12 percent, are held by women.

"The Carter administration has also

failed to include women in any significant way among the individuals it has named to the federal judiciary," charged Gene Boyer, president of the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund.

Susan Ness, chair of the Legal Support Caucus of the National Women's Political Caucus added that, "the verdict is in, none of the nine U.S. Court of Appeals judgeships, only one of the 19 U.S. District Court judgeships and only three of the 60 U.S. Attorney slots were filled by women appointees. Typically, of the ten Judicial Selection Commissions hand-picked by the Carter administration, none is chaired by a woman."

No pinching

A Manhattan criminal court judge recently ruled in favor of a woman who brought suit against a man who pinched her on the subway at rush hour. The defendant asked that the charges be dropped, claiming that his action did not constitute a crime. Judge Benjamin Altman ruled, however, that pinching a woman's buttocks without her consent was sexual abuse in the third degree, a misdemeanor punishable by up to three months in jail.

Although criminal court proceedings are not normally precedent-setting, Altman's ruling has been widely reported in law journals.

(Spokeswoman)

Danger to the breast

Nicotine and other potentially hazardous chemicals found in cigarettes accumulate in the breast fluid of women who smoke, according to new research at the University of California in San Francisco. Dr. N. Petrakis says that he was "concerned that cigarette smoke contains several known cancer-causing chemicals which may be secreted by the breasts and pose a potential risk."

The recent study was conducted on women who were not producing breast milk. Tests found that even while the breast was not actively producing milk a small amount of fluid is secreted by the breast gland and concentrated there. Until this study, doctors thought that only during actual milk production would hazardous absorption of substances in the breast be possible.

"Our feeling now is that almost anything a woman injects or imbibes will find its way into the breast fluid," Petrakis said. In addition to cigarette smoke this could mean that a variety of environmental pollutants may slowly find a resting place in a woman's breast.

This new study means that previous warnings primarily directed at lactating women, with concern for the effects on newborns, tell only part of the story. The accumulation of chemicals in non-lactating breasts may pose a serious threat of disease to the breast itself.

(Washington Star/Off Our Backs)

Skunking rapists

Canadian inventor Paul LeBlond is about to market a unique anti-rape device, the *Los Angeles Times* reports. It's a device, to be sold for \$6.95, that clips onto a bra—or presumably some other piece of apparel—that can make a woman smell like a skunk if the need should arise.

"The skunk has the worst smell in the world," says LeBlond. "We're merely adapting it to kill the desire of a would-be rapist."

The capsules of synthetic skunk oil will be sold with a deodorizer that eliminates the smell by washing.

LeBlond says his skunk repellent can also be used by men and he's considering developing it for use by police or armed forces for riot control purposes.

—Compiled by Doyle Niemann

Miners settlement

Continued from page 3.

Unless they reached an agreement immediately, Carter cajoled, the machinery of government intervention would be started.

As IN THESE TIMES goes to press, an end to the strike is far from certain, since the union's 160,000 working members must still accept the tentative agreement. Prior to balloting, UMW members will see the full text of the contract and discuss its provisions at local union meetings. The UMW is conducting a \$40,000 media campaign to win ratification.

Rank and file approval is questionable because the agreement contains no

significant improvement over the first tentative settlement, which was overwhelmingly rejected by the union's bargaining council. This version merely deletes some of the operators' most punitive demands. Companies would not have the right to discipline miners for simply honoring a picket line, for example, though miners who "instigate" a wild-cat strike could be suspended or discharged.

The contract also imposes total medical deductibles of up to \$700 per year for miners' families. Medical benefits were free under the 1974 contract. The UMW

benefit funds would be changed from an industry-wide program, administered jointly by union and management, to a company-by-company system under private insurance policies.

Pensions for retired miners would also remain unequal.

Opposition to the contract appears especially strong in southern West Virginia (Districts 17 and 29) and southern Illinois (District 12), the union's most militant regions whose combined membership accounts for almost one-half of the union's total. Miners in southeastern Ohio and Kentucky may also reject the agreement.

Although district leaders and local officials are required by the union's constitution to urge ratification, they seem deeply divided over the value of the settlement. Only two-thirds of the bargaining coun-

cil voted to make the P&M agreement the "bottom line" for a comprehensive settlement. Others apparently believe that its terms are too extreme.

"It will never fly in my district," an executive board member from Kentucky told the *Wall Street Journal*. "The only thing we got in the damn contract is a little increase in wages. The rest is all goodies for the companies."

Despite vocal opponents of the contract, observers predict that it will pass by a slim majority. In a recent interview with *Coal Age*, District 17 vice-president Cecil Roberts describes the most likely outcome: "What will probably happen is the contract will be ratified by a small margin like the 1974 agreement, and then we are in for another three years of trouble."



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By David Moberg

CHICAGO

THE PRESS

Field folds News: newspaper bows to market, profit

DEAD, AT AGE 102, *THE Chicago Daily News*, 21st largest newspaper in the United States, recipient of 15 Pulitzer prizes, long respected for innovations and fine journalistic style. Laid to rest March 4, 1978. Cause of death: complications arising from suburban sprawl, the rise of television, contradictions of concentrated ownership, mismanagement, and tension between the newspaper as a public institution of democracy and the newspaper as a privately owned, profit-making business.

Marshall Field V, 36, heir to a retail sales fortune and publisher of the afternoon *News* and the morning *Sun-Times*, confirmed the recurring rumors that had cropped up once more by announcing on Feb. 3 that he was "contemplating" closing the *News*, signaling the legally required ritual of bargaining with the paper's unions before the official death of the paper.

Within a few days, in what was often a sordid and painful affair, 600 people lost their jobs, including 105 of the 225 people on the *News*' editorial staff and 33 *Sun-Times* reporters and editorial workers.

The *News* had lost \$21.7 million in three years and was now losing \$11 million a year, Field reported. He used the same figures last fall when the finances for the *News* were first partially separated from the totals for the newspaper division of Field Enterprises. The privately held corporation controlled by Marshall and brother Frederick with 45 percent of the stock each, also owns *World Book Encyclopedia*, five television stations and ventures from coal mines to paper companies, with an estimated profit of over \$50 million a year on \$400 million in sales.

The newspaper division itself has consistently made money, increasing profits by 20 to 30 percent a year over the past several years, according to the Newspaper Guild. Since nobody but the corporate directors can see the books, there were widespread doubts that publishing the *News*, which shared presses, offices, library, wire services and other vital functions with the *Sun-Times*, really cost the company such large sums over and above the cost of putting out the *Sun-Times*. Some people speculated that since the Field brothers' trust expired last fall, they may be trying to make their operations even more profitable in anticipation of a public offering of stock when the market looks bright.

Cutbacks and revival efforts.

In the late '50s the *Daily News* was a profitable paper with a circulation of 600,000. The crucial turning point came in 1959, when publisher John S. Knight tried to buy the Hearst *Chicago American* in order to give the six-day-a-week *Daily News* a Sunday edition. Hearst backed out on the deal when the morning *Chicago Tribune* offered more money. (The afternoon *American*, changed to *Chicago Today*, folded in 1974).

If Knight had succeeded, at least one Chicago publisher believes that the *Daily News* could have survived as an independently published paper. Instead, Marshall Field IV bought the *News*, and its circulation gradually dropped to around 315,000 before its demise. Now the newspaper field is held by the *Sun-Times* (circ. 582,000), the *Tribune* (circ. 753,000) and a proliferating, profitable bunch of weeklies and a few recently initiated dailies in the suburbs and city neighborhoods.

Its foreign reporters and popular writers, such as columnist Mike Royko, retained a loyal *News* audience, including many upper income suburbanites. Especially in competition with *Today* and in a desperate grab for circulation, the *News* in latter years increasingly resorted to lurid sensationalism and cutbacks in hard news, which angered readers who felt that the paper lost its strength and identity.

In 1976 Dan Hoeg (known as "Attila the Hoeg" for his wildness) was given money and power to reshape the *News* while continuing as editor of the *Sun-Times*. Hoeg returned the foreign staff, improved local news coverage, toned down the lurid headlines, introduced a weekly youth supplement and, last fall,



authorized a bold new design of the paper that proved unpopular with staff and readers. None of the changes proved successful in halting the revenue decline.

Problems of editorial quality, however, were not decisive. The *News* had a large circulation, but it didn't have the advertising. Since the two Field papers had the same staff for advertising and promotion, the *Daily News* suffered as ad salesmen pushed the *Sun-Times* and downplayed the *News*. "If you're an advertising guy and you've got an easy sale and a tough sale," *Tribune* assistant marketing director Les Bridges said, "then you'll go with the easy sale."

Moreover, companies that advertise heavily in the dailies—such as department stores, Sears, grocery chains—"want more numbers, pure numbers" even more than reasonable costs per thousand readers, according to Bruce Sagan, publisher of a chain of suburban and neighborhood papers. As the population of the city spread out, the *News* had less "density of coverage."

Suburban sprawl hurt in other ways: it was hard to transport the paper throughout the wide area in the afternoon rush hour, mass transit ridership declined and people can't read while driving home, and the *News*—like the other papers—never found a good way to cover suburban news.

Finally, when the *Tribune* announced in December that it was dropping home delivery of its afternoon edition, costs the *Tribune* and *News* had jointly shared fell on the *News* alone, adding as much

as \$3 million a year to a circulation budget that totalled \$7.5 million a few years ago, according to one informed source.

The wave of future?

Not everyone accepts the common thesis, advanced in the wake of the *News*' demise, that afternoon newspapers are an inevitably doomed species or that no metropolitan area can support more than two dailies. Afternoon paper sales declined pretty much in tandem with morning sales in recent years and increased last year, excluding those that folded. Many afternoon dailies are monopolies but the *Detroit News* and the *Minneapolis Star* are thriving in somewhat competitive markets and the newly-sensationalist *New York Post* and the *Washington Star* appear to have been revived.

There are plenty of readers for several dailies in any big city, but advertising policy pushes newspapers toward monopolies, since that usually makes it easier and cheaper for advertisers to reach their markets.

Despite lamentations about the impact of television news on afternoon newspapers, TV viewers do read, and they want from their newspapers coverage that they can't get on TV. Newspapers have been tempted by two options in dealing with TV: one is to imitate "eyewitness news" with a breezy approach to "supermarketing the news" and with trendy lifestyle pieces, as a recent *Columbia Journalism Review* arti-

cle described the approach of papers like the *News*.

The other is to expand the traditional strengths of newspaper reporting, as the immensely successful *Los Angeles Times* has done. Home, fashion, style and celebrities obviously have appeal and bring profits but, perhaps less obvious to newspaper publishers, thoughtful investigation, detailed news analyses, controversial opinion and long features could revive the daily newspaper market, judging from the success of such weeklies as Boston's *Phoenix* and *Real Paper*, the *Village Voice* or the *Chicago Reader*.

With more determination and imagination and better management, many people think the *News* could have made it. "I think those turkeys just ran the newspaper into the ground," Chicago Newspaper Guild executive director Gerald Minkinen said. Field turned away potential buyers. (Why would he want competition?) Management rejected Guild proposals for changes in price, schedules of publication and special ad campaigns.

Symptomatic of the way in which advertisers indirectly shape the newspapers, management also turned down an offer from the city's unions to conduct a massive subscription drive with their members. Field management wasn't interested in those blue-collar readers, *News* reporter and Guild unit chairperson Larry Finley said, since the big-money advertisers want young, affluent, educated readers who consume compulsively. Finley lamented, "When you pick the market you want to sell the news to, you violate the birthright of the newspaper."

Vindictiveness in transition.

The shutdown of the *News* was greatly worsened by the way management handled the firings. Since the Guild contract defined the two Field newspapers as one shop and abdicated seniority in the event of economic necessity, management had great discretion in firing. The Guild has filed grievances and NLRB charges that management discriminated against blacks (only four of 14 black *News* reporters were retained), against older workers (three-fourths of those over 50 were fired), and against Guild activists (every unit officer on the two papers was laid off).

Beyond that, "if you think petty vindictiveness is not a part of this, you're wrong," said Paul McGrath, an excellent reporter and editorialist from the *Sun-Times* who was fired. "Most of the people fired from the *Sun-Times* were far, far superior to many of the people who weren't. They fired anybody who had ever been a troublemaker, anybody who ever filed a union grievance, and anybody who spoke up and offered criticism."

While top-notch, outspoken reporters were axed, virtually all of the editors who presided over the *News* as it declined were transferred to editorial positions with the *Sun-Times*. The choices made in firing and the often aggravating way in which assignments were changed have prompted some *News* reporters to reject transfer to the *Sun-Times*.

The trauma of the layoffs was "devastating to your ego and self-confidence," McGrath said. "The survivors are going through survivor syndrome like the survivors of a holocaust, and the victims are going through all the stages of terminal illness—grief, rage, anger, guilt, denial, just like Kubler-Ross wrote about. This is the corporate equivalent of death."

McGrath, like many others, fears that the majority of *Daily News* readers will simply be "lost" and not picked up by the other papers, exactly as happened after *Today* closed. Also, the *Sun-Times* is not adding enough reporters to reverse the restricted coverage of the news that results from a bare-bones staff.

"You never see anything in the newspaper west of Clark Street (which runs just west of the Loop and affluent lake-shore neighborhoods)," McGrath said. "They pretend nothing happens out there. If they could get away with 14 reporters instead of their current 50, they'd do it. If the *Daily News* is losing millions but it's not enough to be a total loss for the division, then we should be able to assume that by getting rid of the least profitable part, they could absorb all the reporters. There is no economic reason to lay off anybody. It's not to cut losses. It's to maximize profits."

IN THE WORLD

Israel seeks a special deal from U.S.

By Gidion Eshet

JERUSALEM

THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT IS in a dilemma. A few years ago Prof. Shlomo Avineri, the Israeli Marxistologist and director general of the foreign ministry in the Labour government, posed the question: should Israel favor a pro-American or pro-Soviet regime in the Arab countries with which it is at war.

Most Israelis, without thinking, would favor a pro-American regime in Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. This has also been the official line. But, although supporting the official line, Avineri made a good case for the opposite view. Assuming that the Arab states wish to destroy Israel and assuming also that Israel can choose the political affiliation of its enemies, it is better that the Russians rather than the Americans be entrenched in Egypt. In this case, Israel is the only U.S. ally in the Middle East, and the U.S. will have to blindly support Israel against the growing influence of the Soviet Union.

This in fact was the cozy situation from 1967 to 1971. Sadat's decision in 1971 to send Russian military advisers back home culminated last week when President Carter asked Congress to approve arms sales to that country.

Israeli's are now wondering if the official line was sensible. For many years Israel helped the American cause in the Mid-

dle East. Well known is the Israeli threat against Syria and the PLO in "Black September" in 1970 when the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was threatened by revolution. Later, Israel gave much support to the Phalangist rightists in Lebanon, helped Ethiopia in its war against the Eritreans and helped the Barazani struggle against the Baathist regime in Iraq. It received an important political bonus for these services. King Hussein did not join the 1973 war and there was one less front to worry about.

As long as the major Arab state—Egypt—was not safely in American hands all went well. Israel could play the role of Communist fighter in this region and demand and receive American aid and backing. The problems began when this policy succeeded and Egypt threw out the Russians.

It was only a question of time before Egypt requested and was granted American military aid. From the American stand-point President Anwar el-Sadat has been doing a wonderful job, far better than Israel could ever achieve. He helped destroy the Sudanese left some years ago. He is helping the Somali fight Ethiopia. He might next use his muscle against Libya.

Israel is thus worried, but it has no choice. Israeli Minister of Defense Ezer Weizman, who is to visit the U.S. shortly, said the other day, in not so many words, that he will not ask the U.S. to



Menachem Begin visited President Jimmy Carter in Washington last December after his talks with Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat had become snagged over the issue of the occupied territories.

reconsider its arms sale to Egypt. He will ask that the Israeli arms deal be separated from that with Egypt and Saudi Arabia. This is necessary to prove that Israel, in American eyes, is a different and special case and deserves a special treatment. Israel is unlikely to make a fuss if its deal is separated and the number of aircrafts granted to it is increased to 150 from the present 90.

But Weizman is considered a moderate. Others, though no one said so publicly, are calling on the government to strain relations with the U.S. by requesting that Assist. Sec. of State Alfred Atherton be asked to refrain from his planned shuttle between Jerusalem and Cairo. Others still are asking the government to show its hand by initiating more settlements in the occupied territories. ■

PLO holds out for Arab realignment



PLO leader Yasir Arafat, Libyan Prime Minister Mu'ammarr Qadhafi, PLO LEADER Nayef Hawatmeh, and Palestinian "rejectionist" leader Dr. George Habash.

By Geoffrey Aronson

The PLO developed a strategy aimed at obstructing if not defeating any Egyptian-Israeli agreement that does not satisfy minimum PLO demands.

PLO is concerned that it as well as the principles of settlement that it supports will be ignored by Sadat, who, the PLO believes, is anxious, together with Iran, Israel, the U.S., and other pro-Western Arab states, to lay the foundations for an updated Baghdad Pact. (The Baghdad Pact was a Mideast version of NATO formed in February 1955.) Members of the PLO see current Egyptian diplomacy as a desperate attempt by Sadat to rescue himself from the diplomatic impasse that followed the publication of the U.S.-Soviet declaration and the subsequent U.S.-Israeli working paper this

autumn—an impasse that centered upon the nature and scope of Palestinian representation at a reconvened Geneva Conference.

Until mid-October, diplomatic efforts were aimed at reviving the Geneva Conference as a forum for reconciling opposing demands. The PLO was actively, if not directly, involved in this process, as Sabry Jiryis, the head of the Israeli Section of the PLO Research Center in Beirut, maintained. "Quiet talks, conducted among the Egyptians and Americans, and including indirect contacts with the PLO, the exact nature of which I cannot disclose, on how to reconvene the Geneva Conference including the PLO, were promising," he said.

"The U.S. statements calling for a Palestinian homeland, Palestinian representation at Geneva, and the U.S.-USSR joint declaration calling for recog-

nition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, were indicative that things were moving gradually in the right direction. The U.S.-Israeli working paper signalled that the U.S. administration had backed down because of Zionist action. The fact that the Palestinian question was unresolved led Sadat to launch his latest initiative."

Ever-elusive Arab unity.

Sadat's decision to visit Jerusalem took the PLO, like all Arabs, by surprise. The PLO leadership, in the months preceding the issuance of the U.S.-Israeli working paper, had evidenced a willingness to accept the legitimacy and territorial integrity of Israel inherent in Security Council Resolution 242 if there was a reciprocal Israeli response accepting the legitimacy of Palestinian national rights. The Egyptian decision to conduct what amounted to separate talks with Israel, in contravention of numerous pan-Arab summit resolutions, by a visit that accorded Israel a qualitatively different *de facto* recognition than had existed previously, and that implicitly recognized Jerusalem as its capital, closed the door to any PLO participation.

The Israeli-Egyptian talks sounded the death knell to Arab attempts, spearheaded by the PLO, to organize a united Arab negotiating position vis-a-vis Israel. The PLO believes this ever-elusive Arab unity, combining the economic and resource power of OPEC, the potentially disruptive Arab states, and the PLO in a genuine alliance with the Confrontation states, to be a prerequisite to any successful negotiated settlement. Only after a front had been established, and only after negotiations had begun, would the kind of concessions that Sadat made "gratis" be entertained.

This position was explained by a PLO source: "Slowly and not without obstacles Arafat and the bulk of the PLO were willing to engage in a dialogue. All this has been sabotaged by Sadat's abandonment of the multilateral format, blocking the

road to Geneva and destroying the formula for Palestinian and Soviet participation. Sadat has said to us, 'If you want to follow Egypt, you can. If not, you can go to hell.' He is trying to get moderate opinion in the Arab world to support him by standing tough. But he must make greater concessions to please the Israelis.

"The only thing that will get us what we want is a strong Arab unified negotiating position. The Israelis won't make concessions out of charity. If Sadat had gone to Jerusalem as the head of a strong, unified Arab world, that would have been one thing. However, as long as Sadat pursues a separate path with the Israelis, nothing can be achieved."

Realignment of Arab world.

The PLO, clearly upset at their exclusion from the core of diplomatic activity, is trying to shortcircuit what they believe to be Egyptian attempts to isolate the eastern Arab front, leaving Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and the Palestinians alone to face Israel. Sadat is "like a snake that can't be trusted," in the words of one PLO source. He is viewed as willing to conclude a separate agreement, ignoring the Syrians as he did in the aftermath of the 1973 war.

PLO officials also take a healthy view of the current Syrian-PLO rapprochement. Highly sensitive to the unstable nature of inter-Arab alliances, they are cognizant of the transient nature of Syria's refusal to join Egypt in the negotiating process. "Syria would screw us if they could get something from Israel. They would, but they can't; so they won't," remarked a PLO source in a candid assessment of Syrian policy. "If they could, they'd be in front of Sadat. What keeps them in line is not love for the Palestinian people but the understanding that there is nothing in it for them. The Syrians are boxed in not by principles but by circumstances," the source stressed.

Together with Syria the PLO has led the movement to organize an anti-Sadat coalition.

Continued on page 21.

ITALY

PCI union chief will trade layoffs for union power

By Diana Johnstone

WITH THE WITHDRAWAL early this month of the Italian Communist party's demand to be included in an emergency coalition cabinet, the "historic compromise" appears to be stalled in a dead end. At least for some time, and at least on the government level. If the power sharing sought by the PCI is to make any headway in the near future, it will apparently have to be on the level of industry rather than government administration. And its vehicle will have to be not the party as such, but the unions, especially the huge PCI-led General Confederation of Italian Labor (CGIL).

Political coalition in the labor movement has been achieved in recent years between the CGIL and the largely Christian Democratic or Socialist-connected CISL and UIL. On Feb. 13 and 14, one week after Enrico Berlinguer dropped demands for PCI cabinet posts, leaders and delegates of the three confederations met in a National Union Assembly to agree to a joint platform defining organized labor's policy towards the economic crisis.

In a now famous interview in *La Repubblica* on Jan. 24, CGIL secretary general Luciano Lama said the Assembly would be "a decisive moment in the history of the Italian labor movement, because the workers' representatives will be called upon to decide, before the eyes of public opinion, what role the working class means to play in getting the Italian ship back on course." The unions were asking workers to make sacrifices—"not marginal sacrifices, but substantial ones," he announced.

Industry's right to lay-offs.

The interview was a bombshell. True, Lama, a great friend of Berlinguer, has long been associated with PCI advocacy of "sacrifices," which made him the favorite butt of mocking slogans in last year's student demonstrations. Indeed, the new Movimento's open break with the PCI occurred when Lama was driven off Rome University campus on Feb. 17, 1977.

But this time, Lama went farther than ever, notably in conceding industry's right to lay off workers. Specific concrete concessions were accompanied by an ideological concession certainly meant to be of major political significance: acceptance of the logic of the capitalist system. Since it was Lama who asked *La Repubblica* to interview him, the timing and impact were not accidental.

Unemployment was stressed as the factor requiring sacrifices not only of traditional demands such as higher wages and shorter hours, but even of employment itself in cases where industry judged workers "superfluous." Up to now, Italian labor has fought harder than its counterpart in any other country against dismissals. Lama's "historic turning-point" would change that and probably add about 300,000 (according to some current estimates) to the 1.7 million officially unemployed. Obliging factories to keep on excess employees was "a suicidal policy," Lama said, which had brought the Italian economy "to its knees."

Along with new job insecurity, the entire functioning of unemployment compensation "must be overhauled from top to bottom," Lama said. The new union platform would call for no more than one year of unemployment compensation, meaning "effective mobility of the work force." In short, rather than go on mak-

ing demands that could only ruin Italian industry, Italian labor must be undemanding so as to attract the investments that will eventually create new jobs. Thus he rejected shorter hours as a solution to unemployment since, he argued, Italians already have the shortest hours in the industrialized world, and "it is necessary for other countries to catch up with us before we can move another step in that direction."

Abandon class struggle.

The key passage in the interview was Lama's theoretical justification for the policy switch:

"We have realized that an economic system does not tolerate independent variables. The capitalists maintain that profit is an independent variable. The workers and their unions, in recent years, have virtually retorted that wages are an independent variable and the work force another independent variable. To put it simply: a certain wage level and a certain employment level were set, and then the other economic dimensions were supposed to be fixed so as to make those levels of wages and employment possible. Well, we must be intellectually honest—that was nonsense, because in an open economy the variables are all dependent on each other."

Here Lama offered the capitalists a lesson in the logic of the capitalist system. Rather disingenuously, however: his logic of "dependent variables" is less the logic of raw capitalism (in which profit indeed rules) than an offer to abandon the class struggle for a complex co-management. Thus Guido Carli, president of the industrialists' association Confindustria, commented that Lama's remarks "imply eventual expansion of the area of union power in running companies."

And indeed, on the very eve of the Lama interview, the Paris daily *Le Monde* published a major interview of its own with FIAT president Gianni Agnelli in which the uncrowned prince of Italian industry mused that capitalists like himself might, regrettably, disappear, but that capitalism would go on as a system—run, perhaps, by the unions.

At any rate, the old "class struggle" approach of the labor movement, repudiated by Lama as the claim that wages and jobs were "independent variables," was not "nonsense" because it logically led to the ruin of the system. That was precisely its intention. Revolutionary Marxists, while pursuing short-range demands for more pay and better working conditions, have looked to the day when the accumulated demands of the militant working class could topple the system and open the way to socialism. In reality, no such thing has ever happened.

Rightly or wrongly, the PCI leadership clearly judges a continuation of the class struggle at this point dangerous to the Italian working class and its organizations. Thus the party and union leaders are offering urgently to call a truce and make a deal with capital.

Class-conscious sacrifices.

The terms of the deal were clear enough in the Lama interview. Lama offered capital: an acceptance of the system, the right to fire "superfluous" workers, restraint on wage demands, reduction of social expenses such as unemployment compensation. In return, he demanded union control over management of the labor market, probably through a Labor Agency in charge of channeling the unemployed into new jobs. This would mean (he added in a clarification the next day)



Above: Bologna labor union demonstration demanding jobs for unemployed youth and women.



Left: Luciano Lama, secretary general of the Communist-led General Confederation of Italian Labor.

growth" in the industrialized world and a long period of widespread unemployment and diminishing real income. How can workers as combative as the Italians consent to all this without repression?

Lama's indirect answer came in a reply to businessmen's laments that in Italy they must confront Marxist, class-conscious unions out to wreck the system, instead of pragmatic northern European social democratic unions. "When," said Lama, "you have to give up your own particular interest in view of noble objectives that give no concrete benefits to those who are called upon to make the sacrifices, it takes a heavy dose of political and class consciousness. There has been a lot of talk on the part of the Italian bourgeoisie of the trouble caused by the fact that Italian unions are class-conscious. Well now, without a high degree of class-consciousness, we could not be making this sort of proposal."

Investment controls crucial.

But to some of the PCI's critics, especially those of a libertarian bent, such proposals add up to "Germanization" of the Italian labor movement, through strengthening of the bureaucracy at the expense of rank-and-file "class struggle" initiatives.

Fears of a more authoritarian society under a coalition of Communists and Christian Democrats are by no means groundless. But the danger of authoritarianism comes with hard times, and the worst danger could be a period of troubles culminating in an Argentine-style "restoration of order."

Simple self-interest dictates that the unions do something about unemployment, since the shrinking of the employed working class can shrink their own influence, even with a "Labor Agency" with some hold over job-seekers. The long-standing demand to control investment cannot reasonably be dropped. Lama's silence on that point may simply indicate momentary discretion over who is to exercise that control and at what level.

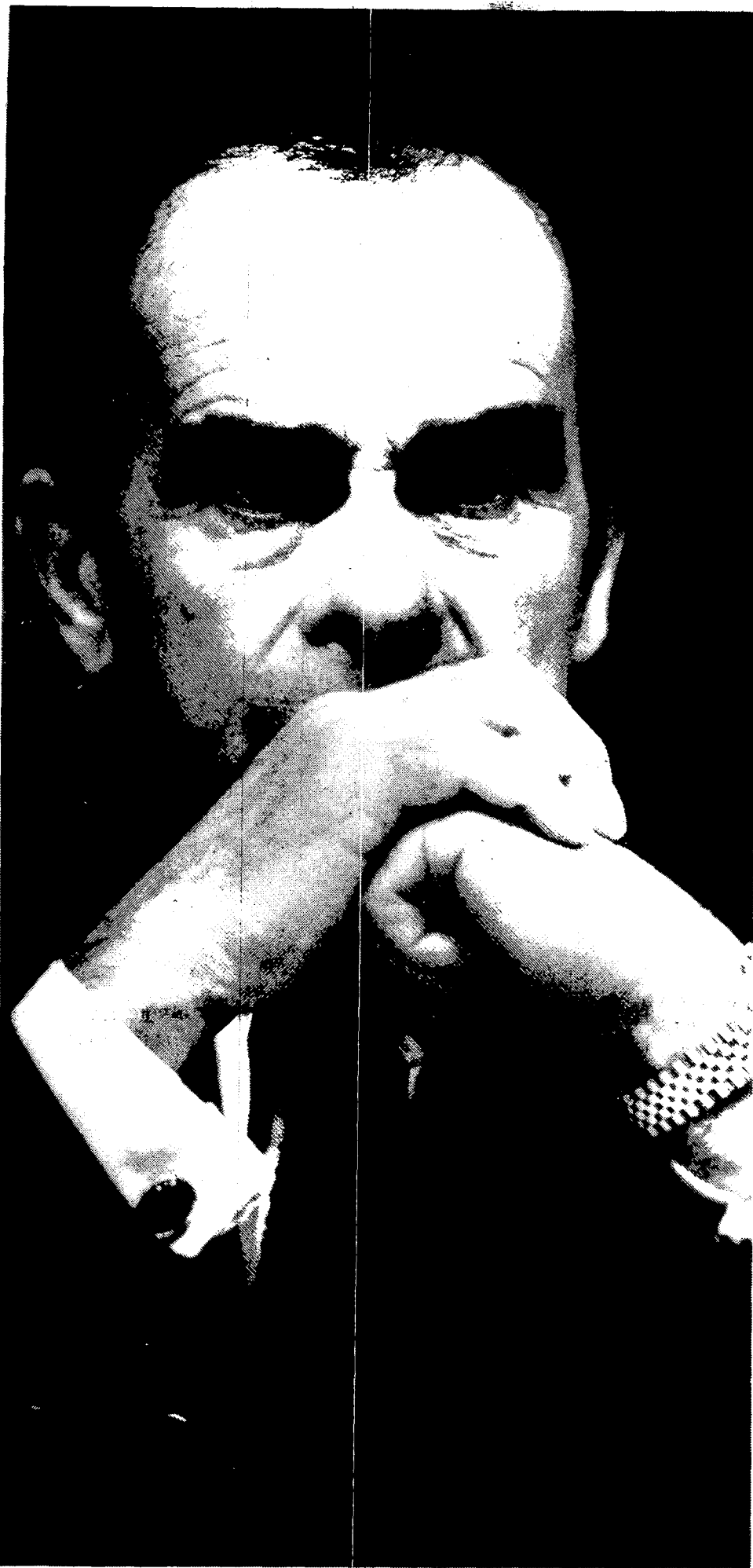
In his *Repubblica* interview, Lama acknowledged that a "socially and politically representative government" (including the PCI, that is) would make it easier to gain rank-and-file approval for the historic change of policy proposed by the union leadership. But, he added, the joint CGIL-CISL-UIL federation "made its decisions in the dark as to political solutions and is committed to carrying them out, whatever the political outcome of the crisis."

But surely somebody in whom the workers have confidence must supervise investment policy—if not a coalition government including the PCI, then the unions themselves. The idea is not new; it has long been part of Bruno Trentin's approach.

All this suggests that with the "historic compromise" blocked at the government level, the time may be at hand for the Italian labor movement to try for a sort of roundabout historic compromise at the industrial level. ■

FRANCE

Communists hold key to left victory



George Marchais

By Carl Weiner

PARIS

YOU'VE GOT TO HAND IT TO the French. They're really putting on one hell of an election this year, a real political cliff-hanger replete with hero-martyrs, harried pollsters with foreboding tidings and best of all an evil prince scuttling about, eyebrows cocked, his face a mask of treachery. It takes an American washed in the blood of the lamb, a veteran of the Watergate passion play truly to appreciate the wonder and hype of it all. Since January 7, when Communist party leader, Georges Marchais said that if PCF didn't get between 21-25 percent of the vote in the first round of elections, the Communists would have to leave the Left Union, the local press has indulged in obsessive daisy plucking: "*Desisteraient-ils, Desisteraient-ils pas?*" Will the Communists behave with "republican discipline" and vote with the much-battered Left Union in the second round?

With scarcely three weeks to go, the latest polls find little has changed in the last month. A six point spread (45-51) in

favor of the left is projected for the first round and, albeit with some monumental and reciprocal teeth gnashing, eye rolling, stomach turning misgivings, the Left Union would win in the second round *if*—if the Communists behave. There it is: after Feb. 20th and by law, no more polls may be published. "The Communists hold the key to victory," says *Le Matin*. Will they or won't they?

All of which, as some commentators acidly noted a while back, is just what the man with the eyebrows and the perfervid hard sell, George Marchais, wanted. Or is it?

Of all the politicians and parties eying the big brass ring, Marchais and the PCF are at the center of an almost universal condemnation. That Marchais and his minions should be considered preternaturally vile by all right thinking trilateral pundits, foreign and domestic, is nothing new. That he and they should find themselves pilloried by the Socialists as jealous spoilers of an abundantly merited Socialist victory was to be expected. But that the PCF should be perceived by a broad spectrum of left opinion, including many of their own militants and sympathizers, as

the despoilers of hope, as burnt out *aparatchiks* callously delaying the "bread and roses" of new beginnings—that was something unforeseen, at least in its violence and ubiquity.

The Communists have been increasingly on the defensive. They have responded by maintaining, even sharpening their polemic. The unpalatable choices they face seem apparent and whether they bite the bullet or spit it out the future of their own party may be at risk. Trying to cut through all the breast-beating calls for quiet comprehension and considerable sympathy, depending upon your loyalties.

PCF's problem.

The core of the PCF's political problem can be simply stated: a victory of the Left Union bestows the lion's share of political profit on the Socialists. Their political sex appeal as a formidable new force in politics would be enhanced, and their ability to attract old social democrats and new social activists would give them the weight to insure their hegemony in a government.

A historic change will be in the making; leadership on the left will have passed from the Communists to the Socialists. Mitterand and the Socialists come out the winners, the twin segments of his astute and generous vision fully vindicated: first, that the legitimacy of a revised Socialist Party depended upon its ability to elicit Communist endorsement of a program of basic structural reforms to be carried out by a popularly elected left coalition and second, that this left coalition wouldn't come to power if the Communists were its dominant element. The Communists hold the keys to victory, but they are not the keys to the kingdom.

To understand why the PCF fell in with these plans requires an immense and perilous leap of the imagination. You must entertain the idea, at least as a working hypothesis, that they are neither egregious fools nor paranoid, power mad autocrats but, for all their manifold rigidities, serious and responsible people who have honorably upheld the interests of the French working class through a time of intense social change.

The point is that the PCF has a large constituency that believes the party has frequently been the sole clear voice fighting for social justice in France. In essence their kamikaze tactics in risking the break-up of the left coalition have been an attempt to force the best deal they can get from the Socialists before they bow to the inevitable and settle for what they can get. The French rather disdainfully call this vote grubbing, but it doesn't appear different from the power plays of various interest groups (blacks, labor unions, cities, or women) in American electoral politics. It seems obvious that the Socialists are playing the same game, which provokes great indignation from the Communists. Mitterand's steadfast refusal to come back to the bargaining table is at the center of their discontents.

High stakes.

Of course the stakes are much higher than in most American elections. The extent of nationalization and the number and relative importance of the ministries to be given the Communists are not fake bargaining counters. The Socialists fear that more nationalizations would let the Communists occupy the commanding heights of the economy through PCF control of the largest trade union the CGT, and ongoing implantation of PCF cells in many industrial concerns. The Communists fear the worst: the marginality of their minority status if they ended up with Posts and Telegraph and not much else. Besides they've been there before back in the grim days of the immediate post war era and guess who pulled a dirty trick on them then?

Received wisdom has it that France has passed through its post-industrialist revolution during the past twenty to twenty-five years. The profits from this "econom-

ic miracle" have been very unequally distributed so far as long term benefits to the working population are concerned. What's more, France is still very much a "closed society" and perhaps nowhere else do the economic and social distances separating classes count so heavily as they do in labor relations. One can still get fired in France for not saying hello to your boss in the morning. The barriers of deference, exclusivity and social disdain have withstood the winds of change quite well.

The great strides made in the sixties and early seventies have not been repeated during the last five years. Take, for example, one index frequently cited as evidence of the social mutation France has undergone: the percentage of children of working class parents entering institutions of higher education. From a scandalously low 5 percent in 1960, the figure now hovers somewhere around 10 percent; the percentage has doubled but most of the increase took place in the '60s and early '70s. In other words, the curve has flattened out drastically. Just under 60 percent of French men and women earned less than 3,000 francs a month in 1977, and with the rise in the cost of living index at 9.7 percent, and the cutback in hours, a 12 percent rise in hourly wage rates translates out to an actual 1 percent increase in real wages for the year. And despite almost hourly announcements by the Barre regime of a fall in the numbers, unemployment will have increased by more than 13 percent during 1977. Stagflation and unemployment reign. The Arabs and the Americans are calling the shots, everybody has to tighten their belts and guess who gets to tighten their belts first?

Communist aims.

Marchais insists that he is not about to enter a left government in order to help *gerer la crise*, manage the crisis. The Communists have advanced far more optimistic projections as to what the economy might accomplish than either the Socialists or most certainly the current majority think possible or practicable. Marchais has thus frequently been accused of rampant demagoguery in his fulminations against the evils of austerity. I have no idea of just how justified the Communists' expectations are. Within the optic of institutionalized inferiority, arguments based on technocratic necessities very often appear as just so many attempts to undermine the very modest victories so recently won. Also, one person's recession is another person's depression, if not total tragedy, and, again the Communists' historic role has been that of spokesmen for the most vulnerable within this society. Neither Marchais nor Georges Seguy can afford, in this current juncture of events, to tamely accept the dictates of technocratic wisdom. They will continue to insist up to the penultimate moment on a better deal.

Way back in the sixties Marchais and the PCF also chose to accept a gamble in the name of a vision as generous as that of Francois Mitterand. A union of the left meant a conclusive departure from the outmoded model of a Godot-like revolution that never came. But according to socialism through a broad coalition by electoral means in a measured series of structural changes was not meant to result in a crippling loss of autonomy. The price for entering the mainstream, the cost of ending their status as a pariah party has, like everything else, skyrocketed in the last ten years. Is it any wonder they are leery of handing out blank checks to the Socialists?

And yet the seeming alternative, the muffing of the best chance to end decades of right-center domination, may be too terrible to contemplate. The Communists hold the key to victory and they have been left holding the bag. It's a whole new ballgame, one that their imagination and courage in part summoned into being: one in which, with immense pain and terrible risk, they will try to reconstruct viable political options.



THE HOUSE OF MIRRORS AMERICAN WOMEN AS REFLECTED IN THE MAGAZINES THEY READ

The women's magazine industry is one of the most lucrative in the U.S. today. Six new magazines have entered the field in the last two years; six more are announced for this year; and the established ones are fatter (with advertising) than ever.

The commodity is produced, of course, in order to make a profit for the publishers and advertising agencies and a market for the products of advertisers. It can only succeed in these endeavors if women buy the magazines, and they will only do this if they think they want to read the contents or at least look at the illustrations.

If the women's movement has changed the self-image and the (felt) needs of American women, the change ought to be reflected in the reading matter these women select for themselves. The circulation of the two best-selling women's magazines is presently something over 8 million each. Allowing for some overlap, at least ten—more likely 20—million individual women choose to buy one or more of such periodicals every month.

In the following pages, five different writers examine five segments of the whole field in an effort to define the changes in each. From the answers they come up with, something can be deduced about the direction, the depth and the permanence of changes made in the consciousness of American women over the last 15 years.

THE BIG THREE PLUS THE GIANT TWO

The woman's magazine field is popularly believed to be dominated by the Big Three: *McCall's* (with a circulation of 6,500,000 in 1977, the *Ladies' Home Journal* (6,000,000) and *Good Housekeeping* (5,000,000). Actually for some years now there have been two that outsell them: the supermarket specials, *Woman's Day* and *Family Circle*, which depend entirely on newsstand (check-out counter) sales and have verified circulations of over eight million.

There are differences in emphasis and constituency among the Big Five. The supermarket twins think of themselves as servicing the needs of mothers and homemakers in the realms of cookery, handicrafts, fashion, decorating, health and the "management of money" on the domestic level. They address themselves to the widest possible audience—the most conservative.

The other three have carved particular segments of the population for whom they perform the same services and some new ones. *L.H.J.* is aiming for "the new traditionalist" and attempting to define and enhance her "lifestyle." *Good Housekeeping* is edited for the homemaker between 25 and 40. *McCall's* says it's edited for the "new suburban woman." Most of the editors and all of the publishers are men, and

all have worked with and for each other—which may explain why, despite some interesting differences, there is a deep, basic unity of tone and approach.

Many of the examples used in this discussion are taken from late 1977 issues of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, but equivalents could have been supplied from either *G.H.* or *McCall's* or even from *Redbook* or *Cosmopolitan*, and there is no perceptible difference in more recent issues of any of them.)

What's new?

First of all, there is an apparent change in the reality that women's magazines reflect. Where the stress was formerly on the stability of sex roles, and the premise was always a woman's total commitment to husband, children and domesticity, now there is ambivalence about what women are and ought to be doing and an attempt to patch up and paper over an image of American home life that has been shattered by deep earth movements.

Barbara Ehrenreich, speaking to a recent N.A.M. convention, noted that "the *Ladies' Home* is now printed in small, almost indiscernible type, while *Journal* stands out bold and strong." Inside the covers are articles on "how to handle your first job interview" and reports on "how working wives cope." There is a page of short items called "Working Woman" that is reminiscent of the early days of the women's movement and *MS* magazine. One of these, typically, is called "Our Kids Are Doing Fine" and contends that children of working mothers do as well in school as children whose mothers are waiting to greet them with snacks at 3 p.m.

The material seems to be directed toward the woman who has left—or is about to leave—home after years of marriage and child-raising. She is given the go-ahead with statistics that

prove "employed women experience less stress than either housewives or unemployed women." There are articles on "how women just like you are getting better jobs" and advertising to match, e.g., an Equitable Life Insurance spread, addressed to the executive who is making \$25,000 a year and is shown with an attractive attache case.

There is a recognition that years of isolation in the home and years of unpaid labor have eroded most women's confidence to such a degree that they need to be told "how to handle a job interview" and needs to be reassured that the skills they have cultivated as homemakers are transferable to the world outside the home. There is even an admission that "a woman who leaves homemaking for paid work is like a man who changes his trade and his religion at the same time."

It all adds up to a sustained soft sell to persuade women to return to the labor force and assure them they can make it. But the aspirations projected are not very high. The skill one is most often advised to brush up on is typing. The housewife is offered the chance to clean up and organize someone's messy office as a secretary or a file clerk. Or, if she's really lucky, to "break into real estate."

What's not so new?

So much for the "new." It still does not—even in *L.H.J.* and *Redbook*—alter the premise that women are preoccupied with responsibilities that have nothing to do with (or are even in conflict with) their jobs. Psychologically and emotionally women are seen as absorbed with home and family. Hence the preponderance of text devoted to "servicing the homemaker" and articles on marital and child-rearing problems.

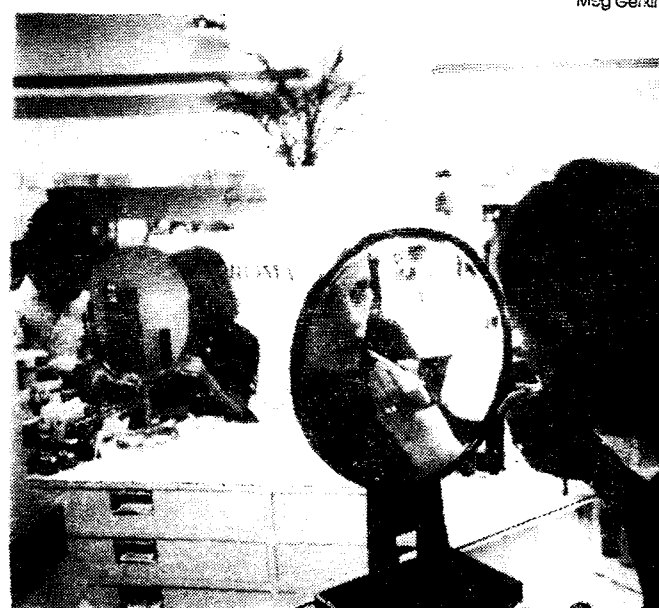
Meg Gorkin



Jane Malnick



Meg Gorkin





Women are still portrayed as not liking sex, or as having sexual problems they can't resolve. They still need to learn how to cope with their husbands' infidelities. (In a recent *L.H.J.* article the reader is told that the institution of marriage has actually been improved by the fact that infidelity is now so accepted that women don't have to pretend it does not exist.)

In this realm women are offered several new options. They can work on their own sexuality so that their husbands won't need to look for a more dynamic sex partner. They can go to a marriage counselor. In a section entitled "Can This Marriage Be Saved?" (which is supposed to be derived from the files of the American Institute on Family Relations), people who can't communicate their most basic needs to each other, despite having been married for ten or more years, are brought together by a counselor's magic words. Or they can get a divorce, this being the least approved choice. The one thing they must not do is have retaliatory affairs, and for the reason that only a "sick man" would want to have an affair with a married woman.

There is one new element in all this. The woman is not assumed to be the only one at fault. Nor is it absolutely required that the marriage be patched up. This is most evident in fiction, where in the place of the inevitable happy ending, there are more married women walking off into the sunset, pregnant and not willing to stay with their husbands. There are also more women who seem to have it made, with health, wealth and beauty, etc., portrayed as deeply conflicted and despairing. And there are more men revealed as faulted by the inability express emotion.

But on the whole and across the board, the giants in the field

of women's magazines still reflect and reinforce the basic assumption that woman's place is in the home—with one's husband and 2.5 children. —Carol Becker and Janet Stevenson

COSMOPOLITAN—SOFT-CORE PORN IN TWO LANGUAGES

Cosmopolitan says yes to the sexual revolution, but no to feminism—a message 2.5 million women pay each month to read.

The key to *Cosmo* is editor Helen Gurley Brown. Author of the 1962 best-seller *Sex and the Single Girl*, Brown sold the Hearst Corporation on the idea of a slick new monthly geared specifically to the burgeoning singles market.

Brown's solution to social and sexual inequities is work. "You have to work very, very hard at your job," she counsels, "and have self-discipline and think it is moral to want MORE out of life—more for yourself." Success is defined traditionally, e.g. the 20th Century Fox executive Brown netted as a husband at the age of 37.

This blend of narcissism and Horatio Alger self-improvement is at the root of *Cosmo's* distinctive format. Articles are insistently self-directed, the reader continually admonished to preen herself in a physical and moral mirror. How-to pieces on staying thin and looking sexy ("Legs Are Back—How to Show Yours Off Outrageously") alternate with others that take on inflation and divorce ("How Not to Make a Failure Out

of Your Divorce—Important Advice About Money Lawyers"). Written from the perspective of the "working girl," the latter pieces are free of the upper-middle class bias typical of more feminist publications. They assume their readers do not count a lawyer among their friends and give sound advice on shopping around for one.

Consumerism and soft-core porn

But while there is no denying the intrinsic worth of individual *Cosmo* articles, the overall image of the magazine is that of consumerism wedded to soft-core pornography. Month after month *Cosmo* fashion spreads and covers advertise the high sheen glamor of disco outfits draped over half-exposed breasts. The models stare in the uniform mask of commercialized sexuality—mouths pouting in the latest fashion lipsticks, eyes rimmed with mink lashes, the whole framed by the salon luxuriance of Farah Fawcett-Majors' hair.

What *Cosmo* projects is the image of sexuality marketed by advertising and the mass media. Like the baubles she wears, the *Cosmo* girl is a product on the sexual marketplace, an image created (as in *Playboy*) according to the specifications of male fantasy to appeal to women whose consciousness has been formed by the media. On the raw material of America's small towns, *Cosmopolitan* superimposes the image of bionic supergirl—toned down cheesecake projected into the lower-middle class milieu of secretaries and airline hostesses. *Cosmopolitan* celebrates female sexuality. But it is a sexuality as yet unfreed from the bonds of sexism.

The Latin-American equivalent

Cosmopolitan En Espanol is big business. No less than six editions published in Panama with editorial offices in Virginia Gardens, Fla., and key cities in Latin America, sold throughout the Spanish-speaking world and selected areas of the U.S., have a collective circulation of 312,000.

Like its English counterpart, the U.S. edition of *Cosmopolitan En Espanol* is slick and big on cleavage. However, unlike its American original, which unabashedly celebrates a freewheeling singles lifestyle, *Cosmo En Espanol* appeals primarily to the new hip Latin American bourgeoisie—affluent young marrieds who take birth control pills and keep slim, and are sophisticated enough to toy with the notion of an affair.

The chica *Cosmo* has traded the kitchen for the bedroom, tailored shirts for halter tops and plunging necklines. Yet her world is one in which *machismo* remains the unchallenged order of the day, where neither divorce nor the workplace figure as topics of discussion. Sex is treated almost always within the context of marriage. "A Very Frustrated Woman—With a Very Impotent Husband—Tells How She Perked Up Their Sex Life," "Second Hand Husband," "Pregnant? With Sex Drive?" are typical of the goulash *Cosmo En Espanol* dishes up.

Most significantly, what passes for "modern" is American-exported consumerism. This is reflected not only by the ads, fashion spreads, articles and fiction, most of which are translations of American originals, but most graphically in the choice of models. Virtually all of them—male as well as female—are white, with a disproportionate number of blonds. For the Latin market the image of pampered womanhood

that *Cosmo* projects equates being modern and being attractive with looking American and looking white.

Cosmopolitan En Espanol challenges the myth of contented domesticity in the Latin women's magazine market, but unfortunately, it does nothing to challenge the myth of *machismo* and the flagrant export of American consumerism.

—Lynn Garafola

VOGUE MOVES THE CLOTHES FROM HANGERS TO BODIES

There's a lot more to clothes than the fact that you get arrested if you aren't wearing them. Clothing manufacturers and retailers do millions of dollars worth of business putting shirts on people's backs, and a volatile business it is. Fashions change so rapidly that the style-conscious consumer can barely keep up.

Two big questions arise from this state of affairs: how do people know what to wear and how does the clothing industry know what to make. (The order, of course, is reversible.)

The answer is fashion magazines that will tell people that this is the way they're supposed to look. And that goes from haute couture to Sears polyester copy of it.

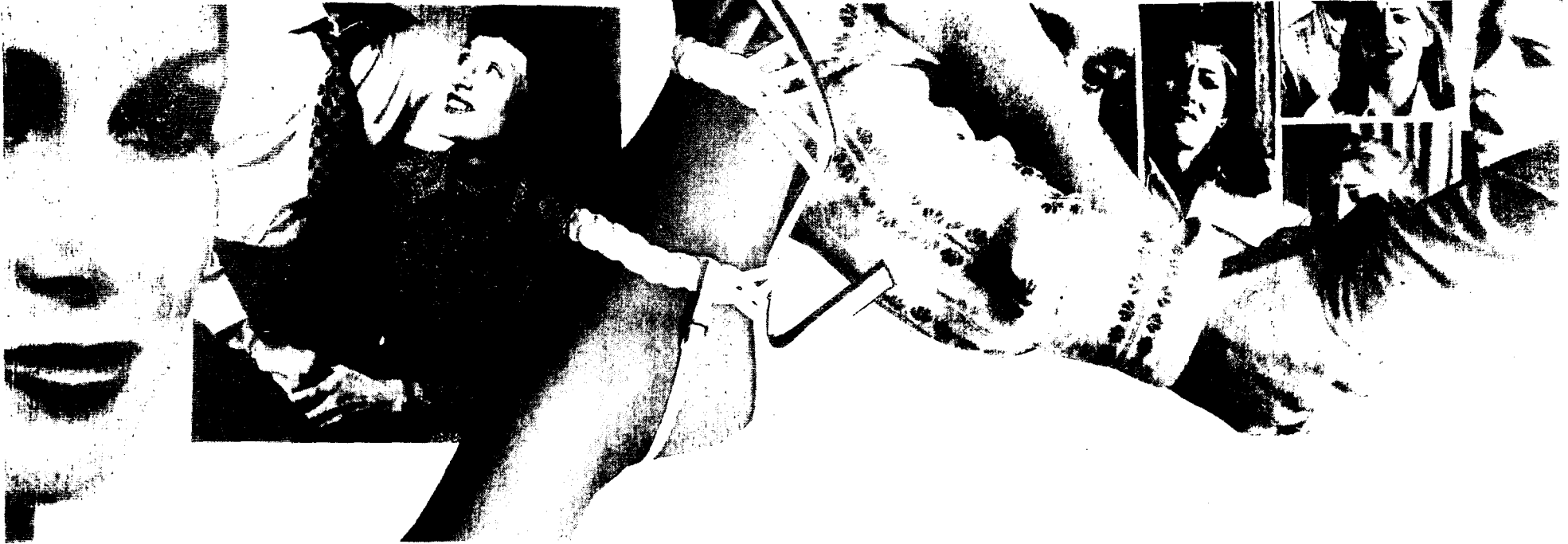
Three magazines—all published by Conde Nast—compete for the large mass of women whose tastes fall between *Women's Wear*



Meg Gerkin



Meg Gerkin



Daily (for the jet set crowd) and *Seventeen* (for 8th graders). These are *Mademoiselle*, *Glamour*, and *Vogue*. Although they are similar, if not identical on the surface, there are differences.

The career girl's Bible

Ostensibly, *Mademoiselle* is the college-educated career girl's Bible, telling them a lot more than just how to button this year's blouse. It leans on its reputation as a literate publication. (They never let you forget that Sylvia Plath was once a guest editor.) Each issue contains poetry and fiction, regular reviews of the arts and special interest columns, e.g., "The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Sex."

But *Mlle's* meat and potatoes is ultimately, clothes. The first two-thirds of each issue is advertising of them, and such accessories to them as jewelry, hair dye, make-up, shoes, underwear, nail polish, cars, glasses, purses, perfume, silverware, furniture, contraceptives, Jamaica and the National Guard.

Only after plowing through all that does one finally arrive at the title page, "Mlle's Next Word," which explains what is to be demonstrated in the layout that follows: "Now Sexy Is In" or "The New Summer Fates." (They are not above contradicting themselves, and after stocking your closet with monochromatic pastels, you may find that the next issue announces "The Big, Bold Brights.")

Glamour has no pretensions to high culture. Art reviews are replaced by "how-to" articles and "test yourself" quizzes, e.g.,

"How To Have a Happy Confrontation," or "How To Stop Making the Same Dumb Mistakes."

Glamour's fashion pages lean toward the basic "what-looks-good-around-the-water-cooler" are always fresh and wholesome—a type that is evidently in short supply since they've used the same cover girl for every other issue for the past couple of years.

If money is no object...

At the other end of the scale from *Glamour* is *Vogue*, regarded as the most sophisticated and intelligent of all women's fashion mags.

Vogue doesn't putz around with the "50 great fashion finds for a working girl's budget." They run spreads on seasonal collections with portraits of the beaming designers, and occasionally—not often—the price of some of the highlights, e.g., a gold lame pantsuit for \$1,300 or, "if money is no object," a \$35,000 sable coat.

Its avant-garde fashion photography is celebrated. A shoe ad that shows a woman stumbling from a burning car, an ad for something that shows a woman with a cord plugged into her back . . . the variety is endless. The models in *Vogue* are dark-eyed, brooding, with faces shaped like kites, unless they decide to shock the reader with Farrah F-M and her 23 visible teeth.

Like its sister publications *Vogue* is very big on health and exercise. Subtle class differences show up here as *Vogue* readers are advised to "consult your doctor" before undertaking the simplest routine.

Whose reality?

How closely do these magazines reflect reality? Well, it is someone's reality, but the clothes in *Vogue* were never meant to be worn on the bus. (*Glamour* and *Mlle* at least occasionally acknowledge that some of their readers could do with a bargain.) On the point of "Women as sex objects," despite the approach of the advertisements, the copy in all three Conde Nast magazines encourages women to be aggressive, individualistic and accomplished—within a capitalistic framework, of course.

I buy these rags every month—all three of them—and I'm still not sure why. I can't afford the clothes; I hate exercise; I don't like to cook—and I seldom read the articles. I guess maybe I hope to learn how to stop making the same dumb mistakes.

—P. Hertel

CONFESSIONS TURN TO ASSERTIVE- NESS TRAINING

Although confession magazines are not my escape reading (I'm hooked on *Vogue* for that), I buy them every once in a while to find out where the ideological front really is.

If you line up magazines next to the classes to whom they are addressed, you'll find—over the last ten years—relatively little change in *Vogue* at the top of the economic ladder and considerable change in the confession maga-

zines that occupy the lower rungs. This, despite the fact that the format of confessions plays down the changes in content whereas the format of *Vogue* (et al.) is geared to convincing the reader that lifestyle changes of such magnitude are taking place that substantial outlays of money can be justified as absolutely necessary for coping with them.

This should come as no great surprise if we look at the social reality that is processed and packaged by these magazines. For the lifestyles of the upper bourgeoisie are relatively static whereas the working class must constantly adapt to change if it is to survive.

The advantages of a working wife

A year or two before the current recession I read a confession magazine story called "My Husband Caught Me Doing the Secret Sin," which ran as follows:

The heroine visits an orphanage with a woman friend who is adopting a child and is captivated by some of the unadoptable children she sees there. The next day she does her housework and then yields to this terrible urge she's been getting lately. She goes back in her mind to her wedding night (no weird fantasies for her) and just as she climaxes her husband walks in the door. "Aren't I man enough for you?" he shouts, then won't even talk to her. Her woman friend suggests a doctor she might see to find out what is wrong with her. The source of the problem, the doctor explains, is that she and her husband have different rhythms because he works and she doesn't. So the heroine saves her marriage and her husband's ego by getting a job with those unadoptable children at the orphan asylum.

Because confession magazine stories are firmly grounded in the daily details of working class life, going back to work is not generally presented as an avenue to personal fulfillment for women, except under circumstances like the following:

We were silent for a moment. Then Mom said quietly, "Let me explain how I feel about this, Heather. You see, in the first place, there is the question of money. Like you said, we're not poor. But your father is working awfully hard to keep us going, and he's not getting any younger. And I feel I ought to do my share. You can understand that, can't you?"

"I guess so," I mumbled. "But there's more to it than that," she went on. "There is me and what I am going to do with myself from now until I'm 65."

"What do you mean, Mom? Why should anything be different for you?"

She sighed. "Well, honey, just try to see it from my point of view. Tad will be graduating and he'll either go away to college or into the service. And in a few more years you'll probably be out of the house too. Your dad has his work and his organizations. So where does that leave me?"

"And having that job—that's going to make you feel like you're needed again?"

She nodded.

(*Modern Romances*, December 1977)

You'll notice that being "out of the house" does not mean going to college for Heather. Her brother may go, but the college experience has not found its way into the lives of confession magazine characters. What has found its way in is abortion, sex therapy, premarital sex, assertiveness training, interracial marriage and "total womanhood."

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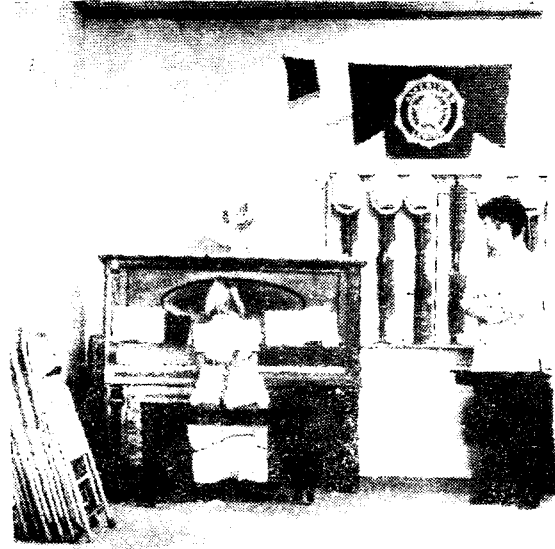
Ken Firestone



Meg Gerkin



Meg Gerkin





Graphic/Tom Greenfeder

Assertiveness, yes; abortion, no

Sex therapy and (more recently) assertiveness training have blended smoothly into the confession formula, usually through the agency of a doctor. For instance, "I'm Afraid I'm Going Out of My Mind" (*Modern Romances*, December 1977) features a wife who, when the alarm goes off at six o'clock, has been "lying sleepless for hours" but is so overwhelmed with fatigue she can't get up to fix breakfast for her husband, who worked a 12-hour shift the day before and yells at her for being lazy. While recuperating from an unsuccessful suicide attempt, she turns on a talk show where a Dr. Graham is discussing depression. "One of the first things I tell my patients," he says, "is to learn to say 'no' to people." She does this more and more, finally running off to a hotel for two weeks, at the end of which she calls up her husband and comes home to his waiting arms a cured woman.

There is a lot left out of the confession magazine world for all its acceptance of women working, marital infidelity and other threats to heterosexual bliss. Attempts at reconciliation never fail. Single parents still tend to be widows and widowers, the current statistics on divorce rates notwithstanding. This is a world where life with another man can never be better than life with the one you have, a world where one can move sideways, as it were, but never up, where people who strive for more than what their parents had find that affluence means nothing but kicks.

This probably explains the absence of college as an option for its inhabitants. It also explains why the genre can be progressively more and more liberal in matters of heterosexual morality. For what does it matter what people do in their private lives so long as the wish for more is contained therein?

—Kate Ellis

MS—STILL THE ONLY LARGE CIRCULATION FEMINIST MAGAZINE

In *Ms.* magazine's first issue, July 1972, the editors offered a statement of purpose that bubbled with optimism about this new, national feminist journal's ability to provide the women's movement with its own communication and outreach. Priority was to be placed on activist-oriented articles that would speak directly to the concerns of working-class women and welfare mothers, as well as the reliable middle-class constituency. A

firm stand was taken on advertising: no ads insulting to women would appear in *Ms.*

Five years later that statement seems naive, and today's *Ms.* seems far removed from it. There are plenty of ads in *Ms.* that promote sexist stereotypes if they do

not actually insult women, and the notion that the magazine's mission is to serve the grass roots of the women's movement seems a dead letter.

The change did not come about overnight.

An examination of the contents of issues in 1972 and 1973 shows that there was coverage of a broad range of feminist concerns: news articles and features on sports, ERA, lesbianism, poverty as it affects women, psychology and housework. But in the years that followed there were more articles on the arts and individual artists, interviews with glamorous or successful women who have "made it" in a man's world and tips on how you can do the same.

There is now a steady flow of advice on credit problems. Therapy has replaced the issue-oriented, newsy, political approach. The magazine has become a forum for some excellent fiction writers and journalists, but its appeal is to a generally professional readership, and it is increasingly disengaged from the struggles of the feminist movement.

Reasons for the shift in focus may be the isolation of the New York women who founded and produce *Ms.* from the majority of activists in feminist projects in the rest of the country, as well as the gigantic job of getting out a successful mass-marketed

monthly. The harsh facts of contemporary publishing are that you must create a big readership fast or go the way of *Life* and *Look*.

And *Ms.* is the only mass-circulation feminist publication around.

With a circulation of 2.5 million, it reaches far more women than any feminist organization in the U.S. Even those who are most critical of it, read it. (A recent survey done by a radical, separatist, feminist publication showed that over 80 percent of its readership regularly reads *Ms.*)

There is some evidence of a repoliticalization of *Ms.* in the last 12 months, perhaps because the growth of anti-feminism has recharged the editors' commitment. Or perhaps because success allows them to be more daring.

But even when the magazine gives consistent coverage to a system problem like patriarchy or sexism, the solutions offered are simplistic and individual. The feminist vision projected is heartily optimistic: despite the nasty pervasiveness of male chauvinism, with some wit and hard work you (you healthy, educated, middle-class women) can get in touch with your own strengths and develop your own "self," career or whatever, supported by the vibes of that force of feminism—sisterhood.

Questions related to fighting on a broad front are never asked. *Ms.* has always been weak on the kind of theoretical analysis that might tie together the many problems it reports. The political spectrum of its contributors is wide, from radical, even separatist feminism to the anti-socialist bias that surfaces in regular contributors like Robin Morgan. But the predominant tone is progressive/liberal reformism.

But even accepting as incurable all its shortcomings, one must be glad that millions of women keep buying a magazine that chips away at the "consciousness" cultivated by *Family Circle*, *Vogue* and the other magazines that American women buy by the millions.

—Torie Osborn

A SELECTED LIST OF WOMEN'S MOVEMENT PUBLICATIONS

The Now Times, quarterly, to the membership of NOW, 425 13th St. NW, Washington, DC 20004.

The Majority Report, bi-weekly newspaper, 74 Grove St., New York, NY 10014.

Women: A Journal of Liberation, quarterly journal, 3028 Greenmount Ave., Baltimore, MD 21218.

Spokeswoman, monthly digest of women's news, 53 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60604.

Off Our Backs, monthly newspaper, 1724 20th St. NW, Washington, DC 20009.

Quest, quarterly theoretical journal, P.O. Box 8845, Washington, DC 20003.

Media Report to Women, monthly plus year-book, 3306 Ross Place, Washington, DC 20008.

Prime Time, concerns of older women, 168 W. 86th St., New York, NY 10024.

Chrysallis, literary quarterly, 1727 N. Spring St., Los Angeles, CA 90012.

Country Woman, five times a year, Albion, CA 95410.

Too numerous to list are special interest publications on women's studies, art and music, lesbian concerns, and many excellent local newspapers including *Pandora* in Seattle, *Big Mama Rag* in Boulder, and *Herself* in Ann Arbor, Mich.



Ken Firestone



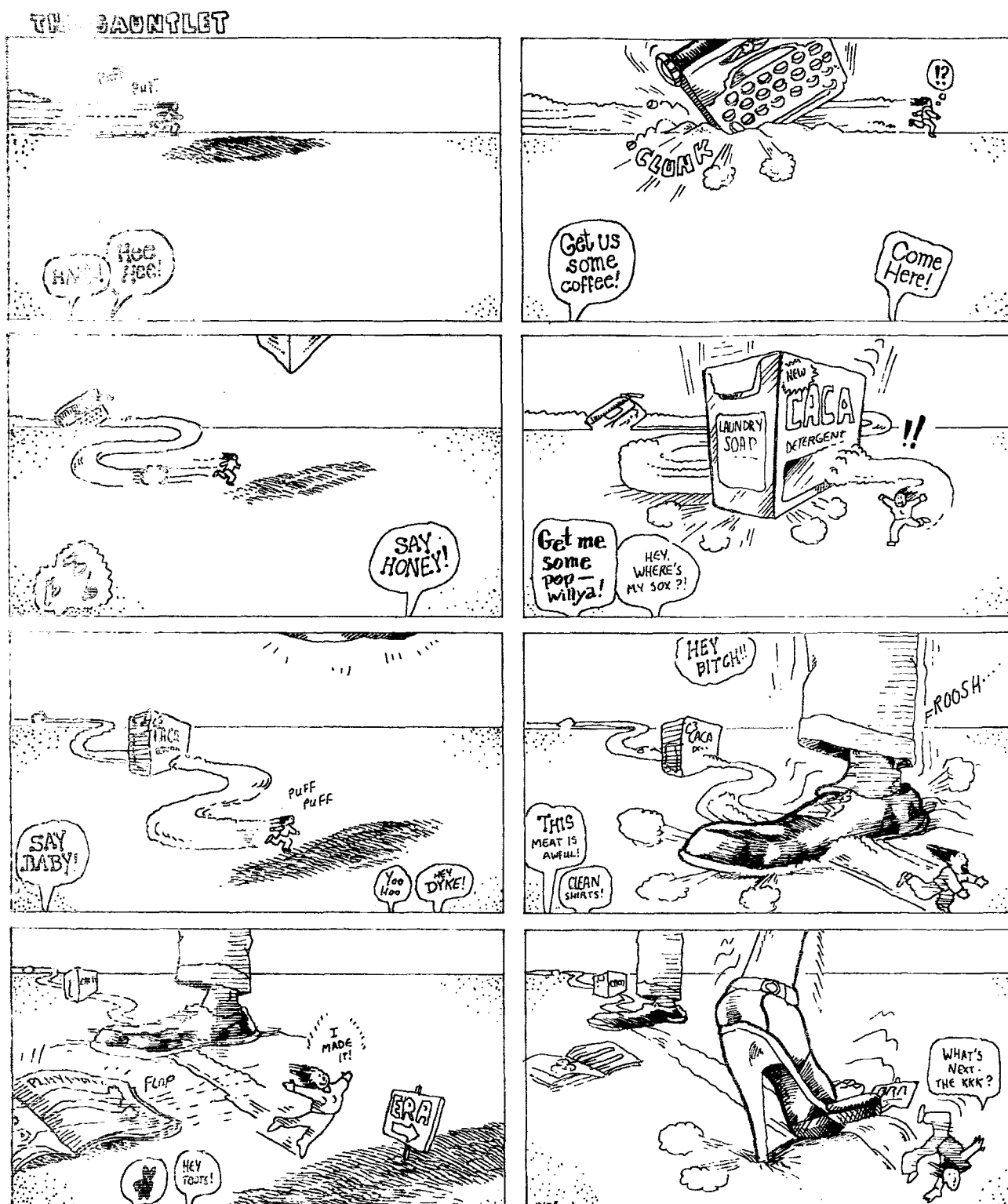
Meg Gerkin



Ken Firestone

IN THESE TIMES

Editorial



Women take the lead

A basic principle of this newspaper is to view socialism as the movements for attaining a democratic society based on the indivisibility of liberty and equality for all. Such a society, by its very nature, must put an end to inequalities of wealth and privilege and must guarantee freedom to exercise liberties, in order to end class exploitation and hierarchical power relations.

The movement seeking to bring this democratic society into being is not a pre-defined "thing." It is not contained within a preordained party or "program." It is not one Movement, but the real historical movements in all their diversity, of working people whose pursuit of equal rights and opportunities bring them into conflict with the limits of the capitalist system of property, labor, and power, and its corresponding rules of social and personal behavior and belief.

To us, socialism is not an exalted spirit hovering "above," or claiming some special priority to the democratic movements. It is the movements in their work of refashioning society.

It is thus pointless to ask whether the movements for racial and sexual equality are a prior condition of "the revolution" or whether equality will come only "after the revolution." The movements for each are integral to the revolution; each embodies and helps shape the socialist society that can emerge from the current stage of American development.

The relationship of modern feminism to the struggle for American democracy and American socialism should be under-

stood from this perspective.

Women and class.

Just as recent movements of Afro-Americans have coincided with massive urbanization and proletarianization of blacks since World War II, so the recent women's movements have emerged with the massive growth, especially since 1960, of women's participation in the labor force outside the home. Just as blacks have found that the struggle for racial equality, or national liberation, is inseparable from the class conflicts inhering in capitalist society, so women have found that the struggle against sexual inequality and the patriarchal family structure in which it has long been rooted is inseparable from the struggle against class exploitation and racism.

And just as the full assertion of black demands, rights and consciousness have required autonomous black organizations, which are not in principle inconsistent with interracial organizations of other kinds, so the full assertion of women's demands, rights, and consciousness has required autonomous women's organizations, which are not inconsistent with organizations of men and women. On the contrary, the independent organizations have proved themselves the essential condition for the greater political development and maturity of the general movements and organizations.

As women have moved, at an accelerating pace, into the paid labor force, they have found themselves employed mostly

as wage and salary workers, consigned largely to sex-typed jobs, with access to inferior education, training and opportunities. They have found their deprivation of liberty and equality to be rooted in the sexual division of labor that shapes expectations and inhibits aspirations, and that serves the reproduction of a labor force, male and female, suited to exploitation by capital. They have found that the American capitalist economy cannot and will not sustain full employment, let alone unalienated working conditions, and that by limiting opportunities and sowing fear and insecurity, capitalism militates against women's liberty and equalitarian aspirations.

In their everyday experience and in the concrete programmatic objectives of their organizations, American women are recognizing and elucidating the connection between the sexual division of labor and the exploitation and inequalities imposed by the capitalist property and labor system. As they fight against one they come into opposition to the other. The program adopted last November at the Houston National Women's Conference, composed of the broadest cross-section of American women, addressed itself to the inequalities suffered in common by all women. It also addressed itself to the major problems confronted by working people in capitalist society.

Women's accelerated move into the paid labor force has come at a time when traditionally middle class occupations have become proletarianized. Their grow-

ing role in the paid labor force reflects both the labor and consumption requirements of capitalism. It is a response to, and to a lesser extent a cause of, the nuclear family's losing to the state and public institutions its former role in childrearing, education, health care, care for the aged, and transmission of cultural and social values.

Socialist feminism.

Within this general historical situation socialist feminism has emerged in the U.S. both as a developing theory of contemporary society and as a political tendency. There have been feminists in the American past, and women socialists, but it is only in the last decade or so that socialist feminism has arrived as a force in American intellectual and political life.

Socialist feminism has many recent roots: in the liberal feminism that arose in the 1950s and 1960s and that in retrieving the feminist traditions of the 19th and early 20th century has sought greater equality within a reformed capitalist society; in radical feminism that emerged in the 1960s and, based on biological determinism, defined "the enemy" ahistorically as nature itself, embodied in maleness; in the New Left movements against racism and the Vietnam war and in the rethinking and regrouping that came with their collapse; in the renaissance Marxian thought making its impact in America over the past two decades; and, most vitally, in the experiences of women as they moved into the paid labor force and into education, culture and politics.

Beyond liberalism.

Growing from these roots, socialist feminist theory has gone beyond liberal reformism without losing relevance to the women's organizations that still predominantly adhere to the reformist tradition. And it has gone beyond radical feminism without losing touch with the latter's insights, depth of feeling and militancy. Socialist feminists have developed in socialist thought an historical understanding of capitalist society that goes beyond narrow economic determinism in understanding the development and crisis of capitalist society. It has freshly elucidated the inextricable links between sexual inequality and class domination, between culture and political economy, between the family and society, the "private" and the "public," the personal and the social.

Conversely, socialist feminists have developed a consciousness of the interrelatedness of women's struggle for sexual equality with the struggle for human liberation from class domination, racial oppression, and hierarchical authoritarianism. They are showing the way to understanding that women's liberation is the condition of men's liberation; in other words, that any American socialist revolution must also be a feminist revolution.

It is no accident that the conservative and right-wing forces in the U.S. are mounting their attack upon democratic movements in general by focusing first and foremost on issues central to women's equality—on reproductive freedom, sexual preference, affirmative action, and the Equal Rights Amendment. They well know the counter-revolutionary imperative of a frontal assault on women's struggles against patriarchy.

In the already substantial body of their writings, socialist feminists have made a major contribution to the development of American and world socialist political theory. In combining rigorous historical study with the social and political experiences of women and their movements, socialist feminists have contributed to the most advanced and comprehensive thinking in American socialist political theory. Socialist feminism as a body of thought is not "auxiliary" but centrally integral to socialist political theory in modern capitalist society.

Letters

Why not the Teamsters?

PHERTEL IN HER REVIEW OF *Blue Collar* describes it as "powerful stuff," "an unsentimental picture of life on the assembly line," and "a larger-than-life dimension." As a former UAW chief steward at the Detroit Chrysler plant and a sometime critic of UAW policies, I find *Blue Collar* to be inane, untrue, tendentious and meretricious. The union steward, one of the villains of *Blue Collar*, earns \$17,000 a year in his position. The foreman is presented as a straw boss constantly riding the workers. The union is named "AAW" and on the walls of the union office there are pictures of Leonard Woodcock and Walter Reuther, former leaders of the UAW. At one point of the film the union leader, exerting his power on a submissive company, has the steward transferred from Detroit to Chicago to make way for Zeke who has been corrupted by both the union and life on the assembly line.

The tale is a thinly-disguised and cynical attack on the UAW and the steward system. No one in the UAW is paid to act as a steward. The steward earns the normal pay that his occupation as an assembler calls for. He is elected by union members and easily recallable if his constituency is dissatisfied with his actions. Stewards are not transferred from one city to another. If any foreman acted as the one pictured in the film, he would long ago have been driven out of the shop by the workers.

Reuther was known to be the sworn enemy of any person who engaged in loan sharking. Indeed, it has long been rumored that those who tried to assassinate him were racketeers running numbers and other rackets in the plant. A local dominated by loan-sharks would have been placed under trusteeship and the leaders suspended from office by the UAW.

Paul Schrader, the director, has used the assembly line as a prop to support a preposterous story which caricatures and burlesques the worker and demeans his representatives. Hertel informs us that Schrader deals with moral dilemmas in his films, "good and evil awash in an amoral world." If so, why, with the Teamsters an obvious candidate for Schrader's plot, does he pick on one of the best unions in the U.S.?

-Al Nash
New York

Gentrification

DAN MARSHALL'S EXAMPLE of "renovation for profit" (*ITT*, Feb. 15) is by no means unique. This phenomenon is so widespread in urban California that it has acquired an unfortunate but descriptive name among housing activists: "gentrification." In San Francisco this has been going on for some time. San Francisco is blessed/cursed with a plethora of pre-earthquake Victorian buildings that, in poorly-maintained condition have provided much-needed low income housing (however inadequate), but are now the objects of the hopes and dreams of countless single young people-on-the-go who can afford the rapidly escalating rents, taxes, and property values.

There is a unique twist to the problem here, however. Many of the new young rehabbers and tenants are gay. There is a very conspicuous trend in certain neighborhoods of gays (mostly men) buying run-down property, evicting the tenants (often blacks or Latinos), making much-needed repairs, and then renting to other gays. This is leading to understandable animosity between racial minorities and gays. There is a growing feeling that gays are taking over and

forcing low income people out of San Francisco.

This, of course, is not true. The problem has nothing to do with gay people per se (except that gays are likely not to have families and thus have a greater disposable income) but with who controls the money and the land. Low income gay people get evicted too.

I don't know if there is a solution to gentrification within the capitalist system. Any social system must maintain its housing stock and capitalism is doing that in its own way in the movement back to the cities. You really can't run a city with old folks and poor people, as the middle class exodus of the '60s showed.

Timothy C. Dean
San Francisco

NFCB program service

THE ARTICLE ON LISTENER-SUPPORTED radio (*ITT*, Feb. 8) is one of the best short summaries of the history of this kind of radio that I've seen. I was disappointed, though, to see one important part of the National Federation of Community Broadcasters left out. The program service of the NFCB is a cooperative project of the "community radio" stations. It distributes programs produced at the stations and by independent producers, and helps stations share information and resources for programming. Some of the programs are also offered outside our own stations (about 25) to the 900 other non-commercial stations in the country.

Actual and potential producers of politically and culturally progressive audio work can distribute their work through us. I shouldn't even limit it that much—we're interested in any good radio material. We can either distribute programs for people, if they're just interested in being heard, introduce them by distributing a sample of their work and referring requests for more to them, or give them publicity by including written materials describing their work in our mailings.

-Bill Thomas
NFCB Program Service
1217 W. Church St.
Champaign, IL 61820

Solentiname

YOUR ARTICLE (*ITT*, FEB. 8) ON Nicaragua says that a few weeks ago Somoza approved "the destruction of a major Nicaraguan cultural center on the island of Solentiname in the Lake of Nicaragua."

This cultural center is the work of Ernesto Cardenal, a Marxist priest who is considered the most important living Latin American poet since the death of Neruda. This is his home, and he has brought a great uplift to the lives of the native people on the island. He was in New York to read at the "Y" and brought with him a large number of primitive paintings done by the people on the island, work at a high level that was being sold here for good prices. He has published eight or nine books and is beginning to be translated here. One book, "Homage to the American Indian," has been brought out by Johns Hopkins University and is extraordinary. Anybody reading Bonpane's article in *ITT* who knows Cardenal and his work will be astounded that he isn't mentioned, and will be deeply concerned about what happened to him. He is the meaning of the island.

-Millen Brand
New York

[Editor's Note: Cardenal and those members of the revolutionary Christian community he founded at Solentiname who escaped Somoza's troops are living in exile in Costa Rica.]

Damned if you do...

THE TROUBLE WITH CAPITALISM is that it relies on human nature. The problem with socialism is that it does not rely on human nature.

Take Alvah Bessie's article (*ITT*, Feb.

15) on the ability of the rich to escape punishment. What is more normal than for a judge, who is at least a minor member of the elite, to look on the foibles of the rich as "non-violent" and just appearing before the bench is punishment enough." During the '72 campaign, over 20 top execs of major American corporations confessed to or were found guilty of making six figure illegal campaign contributions. Each was fined about \$5,000. Not one went to jail. Not one was fired from his job. Not one lost any prestige among his peers. And it is doubtful that any lost any prestige among the general public. And who were they?

Here in North Carolina, Southern Bell raised an illegal political slush fund by having fake expense vouchers submitted. Charges against 11 minor executives were dismissed when top executives explained that "they thought that they were following company policy." The charges against the top executives were then dismissed since it was found that their testimony gave them immunity under North Carolina law. Thus far, no action has been taken by the parent company, AT&T.

Since no individual or group of individuals committed the crime, the courts decided that the corporation was guilty and so the company pleaded. This must mean that the computers hatched the whole thing.

There is one individual, however, who has not been granted immunity or had the charges against him dismissed. It is the guy who blew the whistle on the entire affair. He didn't play ball, apparently.

-D.B. Lawrence
Weaverville, N.C.

Evasion won't work

DEREK SHEARER (PERSPECTIVES, *ITT*, Feb. 8) believes that it is possible to sugar-coat socialist economic objectives with ambiguous terminology in order to fool the populace into accepting socialism. Such a strategy helps the capitalist class buttress its crumbling hegemony. All the critics, from Roosevelt to the muckrakers, Nader's raiders, single or local issue reformers, Epic, Townsend, including the Hayden campaign, assumed and assured the people that the capitalist profit system is eternal and that they are merely trying to clean away pimples.

Reforms are necessary for survival. Struggle for reforms is class struggle, in which socialists should participate. But there is also a need for socialist organization that can bring socialist consciousness to people.

Our objective is to eliminate capitalism and replace it with a social system based on need. Socialism is not just another reform, more ethical, moral, humanist, socially, culturally and psychologically acceptable. It is all that, because its incentives and social motivation make it a different kind of economy. The capitalist system can no longer solve its problems, nor satisfy the needs of most people. If "economic democracy" were understood to mean the elimination of capitalism, it would serve, but making believe it is but a reform fools only ourselves.

How to establish a socialist economy is still subject to discussion. From other countries' experiments we know some of the trials and errors. For projection and discussion of socialist practice we need a socialist organization and literature.

The hegemony of capitalism was not questioned in previous cyclical crises, but it is in question now. Hardly an economist, even bank and corporation economists, will predict prosperity. Almost all feel insecure and threatened by forces they do not understand. People who struggle for reform quite naturally shy away from the odium capitalist propaganda attaches to socialism, but evasion will not educate our people or convince them to establish socialism.

-Leon Blum
Plantation, Fla.

DIALOG

Socialism redeemed in Shearer's lifetime

Derek Shearer suggests (*ITT*, Feb. 8) that the words "economic democracy" replace socialism in the lexicon of the left.

He states that "Socialism has a bad name in America, and no amount of political education or wishful thinking ... is going to change that in our lifetimes."

Few people would argue that "economic democracy" and what it is conceived to be would be acceptable to more Americans than "socialism." And, programs for a democratic economy under capitalism can result in wider ranging coalitions and forms of political activity. They deserve the full support and participation of the left.

But even Shearer does not argue that economic democracy is a substitute for socialism in its essence. That being the case he must tell us that he believes economic democracy can be achieved under capitalism and that it is preferable to socialism.

Socialism represents more than an economic program. It does not deal solely with issues to reform the present system. Socialism offers a basic alternative to private ownership of the means of production and services. It is predicated on historical development and evidence of the irreconcilable contradictions of capitalism that are leading to its downfall and the possibility of reorganizing society on a higher, more humane level.

This is the reality of our times. It requires a basic exposure of the workings of corporate capitalism and the whys and wherefores of a socialist alternative.

While most Americans are opposed to socialism today there is no longer the knee-jerk reaction that existed in the '50s. If socialists discarded the word alone and not the socialist program, there would be no greater acceptance than the level of acceptance now current.

American public opinion has been subject to great swings and changes over relatively short periods of time. If socialism is valid, if it can provide fundamental answers to the crisis of our times, and if socialists proclaim their aims openly and honestly, then Derek Shearer will see in his lifetime, the good name of socialism redeemed and respected.

-Bill Brewer
San Francisco

Editor's Note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

Making a Big Move?

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Roberta Lynch

Pointed view

I know a woman

I have been watching women lately. I am trying to understand as best I can how the painful gap between feminists and (for want of a better term) non-feminists has opened up. I am trying to understand how women who have never before been moved to action can stand on a street corner petitioning against a simple statute affirming them equal partners in the human race.

I am trying to understand the ways in which so many of us acquiesce in our own oppression. And I am trying to understand the ways in which our movement has pushed some women away and, for all practical purposes, slammed the door behind them.

One factor, of course, is the growing strength of the right wing. But this is only a small part of the problem. Many women don't identify with the right at all, but still remain alienated from the feminist movement.

Barbara Ehrenreich has written eloquently of another factor: the insecurity that women feel in a changing social climate that devalues the traditional female roles of wife and mother without offering any economic alternative. Clinging to these roles becomes a defensive measure against the erosion of an at least clearly defined, if not always meaningful, place in the sun. (See *Moving On*, December 1977.)

It seems to me that there is yet another aspect that has to be taken into account—another piece of this complex puzzle. It has to do with the expectations that we

carry through life—what we believe we are entitled to and what we are willing to settle for.

I know a woman hovering at the late end of middle age. She has a low-paying, low-prestige office job that wears her out and grown children at home who still seem to need their laundry done and their meals cooked. She had a long marriage to a man with whom she didn't get along very well and with whom she argued a lot. She did not go to college and seldom reads. She has only a few friends, little recreation, and limited financial security. Her face is care-worn and she looks tired even when she's rested.

If you probed very deeply into any part of her life, you would likely strike pain. It is a life most feminists would find sad or even "politically incorrect." (Why didn't she just divorce her husband? Why doesn't she get those kids out on their own? Why can't she organize a union if her job is so bad?)

Yet if you asked her—as I have done—if she is happy, she would answer simply—and by her own lights, honestly—that she is. She would talk of her health, which isn't bad; of her house, which is nearly paid off, clean and comfortable; of her children's college degrees, earned on scholarships and loans; of all the people she encounters in her church volunteer work who are so much worse off than she. She would not talk of her own strength or her pride, but if you are perceptive, you would sense their presence in all that she says.

Oh, and she doesn't like women's lib.

I am convinced that she is not unique, this woman. She has been taught to expect only small pleasures and she has been grateful that there were enough of those to carry her over the rough times. She expected to work hard and life has held few surprises on that score. She believes that what she has is about all—more or less—that she can get and so says she is "happy." And if she has other dreams—in this case, learning to ski—they are suppressed or abandoned.

The women's movement seems somehow beyond the scope of her life. It demands things she never imagined having anyway—and so has little to do with her.

What's more, the women's movement makes a very fundamental requirement of its members—at least implicitly. It requires on some level an admission of unhappiness, of dissatisfaction, of thwarted possibilities. It requires confronting and acknowledging the perimeters of one's life.

Such an admission is difficult for any woman. But it is more possible for middle class women for whom those perimeters are much looser, who can see more clearly the possibilities that exist beyond them (and for whom more possibilities exist). For working class women the boundaries press in on all sides; acknowledging them when it's so difficult to see beyond them seems more a threat than a promise. It is like opening the floodgate when there's no sign of high land.



Closing the gap, then, will not be easy. I can only suggest some part of what it will take. It seems to me that on the one hand there have to be more opportunities for more women to change their expectations, to have new experiences, to see new potential. Often these first steps will not be in the form of joining a women's group, but of action on issues that pose less of a threat to the whole fabric of a life, such as joining a union or working for better housing. In the course of such activity, many women have begun to move toward questioning their own assigned roles and toward greater identification with feminist goals.

On the other hand, the women's movement has to stop looking down on women outside its ranks. I have seen as much strength, dignity and humanity in the lives of some women who live simply and within the boundaries as I have in that of any feminist.

This woman that I know—in some ways her life is sad. But if you only see that aspect, then you miss what she has created and defined as worthwhile in her own eyes. I don't think that we will really expand as a movement until we find some way to deal with both sides of such lives. We need to continue to be angered by the way all of us are forced to exist within certain narrow limits. But we also need to respect and build on what women have made within those limits.

Roberta Lynch serves on the New American Movement's National Committee.

Manning Marable

From the grassroots

When a King is not King

More than any other American, Martin Luther King Jr. symbolizes the triumphs and the disillusionments of the civil rights movement. The long campaign to desegregate southern schools, businesses and ballot boxes was an effort to assert humanity within the context of racial hatred and violence. From the marches of small black school children, facing the police dogs of Bull Connor's Birmingham, to the voter education efforts in sharecroppers' houses, the movement radically transformed southern society. Like Frederick Douglass and W.E.B. DuBois before him, Martin personified the aspirations of an entire group of people. In the aftermath of his murder in Memphis and in the light of his achievements, it is easy to forget the shortcomings of this man. Of such stuff heroes are made, and legends for future generations.

Abby Mann's production of *King*, a six-hour television production recently aired on three consecutive evenings on NBC, perpetrates the myth of Martin Luther King. In well acted and at times moving scenes, Paul Winfield portrays the civil rights leader from his peaceful graduate school days at Boston University to his death in Memphis. Winfield and Cecile Tyson, who plays Coretta Scott King, do their utmost to survive Mann's pseudo-documentary style of direction and simplistic, good-versus-evil script. But in the end *King* tells us only a little more about the personal dimensions of Martin than we already know. The contemporary public figure is besieged by nagging doubts and directed by a paternalistic white lawyer and an elitist Negro intellectual, according to the script.

King attempts to capture both the public and private man, and fails to do justice to either. In Boston at the beginning

we are shown a dapper graduate student who loved to rap to young black ladies. "Mike" had earned the nickname "Tweed" because of his love for stylish and expensive suits. At a later period we see a socially-conscious Martin who rejects the opulent house selected by his wife in favor of a modest flat in the north-west side ghetto of Atlanta. Nothing is made, though, of Martin's two early suicide attempts. Martin's deep love affair with a white woman while he was a senior at Crozer Theological Seminary is also not mentioned. *King* gives the public a myth with human failures, not a human being who struggles against his own weaknesses and contradictions.

Part of the problem comes from the film's "view at the top" perspective. Mann deliberately focuses on relatively insignificant issues, like the singing of Tony Bennett or the peculiar, personal preoccupation of J. Edgar Hoover with sex and racial prejudices. Certainly, it is impossible to understand the movement without reviewing personalities, but the emphasis on individuals sacrifices a larger review of the pressing economic and cultural issues that sparked black rebellion in the late '50s.

In Montgomery on the eve of the bus boycott the median annual income for a black worker was \$970. Two out of three families had outdoor toilets. Barely two thousand blacks were registered to vote in the city. Black children were cursed and black women were routinely abused by armed drivers on city buses. The bus boycott, and the hundreds of other desegregation demonstrations that followed, were not primarily concerned with King's "soul force" or with saving white men's consciences. Black folks marched, were brutally beaten, raped and

sometimes killed because they desired a better material existence for themselves and their children. By concentrating on Martin's ambiguous relationships with the Kennedy family and with Lyndon Johnson, the central issues are obscured.

The political antithesis of Martin during the period was, of course, Malcolm X. Before Martin declared the "the promises of the Great Society have been shot down on the battlefields of Vietnam" he praised the President to the skies. In late 1963, Martin asserted that Johnson's "emotional and intellectual involvement were genuine and devoid of adornment." More on target was Malcolm X's evaluation of Johnson as "a fox who duped the civil rights leadership." While Martin was elevating integration to the pinnacle of civil rights objectives, Malcolm X explained it as "a northern liberal smoke-screen that confuses the true wants of the American black man." When Martin wept for John Kennedy, Malcolm X understood his assassination as "the chickens coming home to roost."

The racial confrontations in Watts and Detroit supported Malcolm's analysis over Martin's nonviolent approach. Martin rejected the phrase Black Power because he believed that it would anger the Movement's white supporters. "Beneath all the satisfaction of a gratifying slogan," he insisted, "Black Power is a nihilistic philosophy born out of the conviction that the Negro can't win." Here again, King was simply out of touch with history and the realities of the post-Watts era. Young black students in SNCC and even some of King's oldest followers were tired of going to jail, being abused and shot. "Non-violence might do something," black writer Julius Lester reflected at the time, "but a bullet didn't have morals and it was be-

ginning to occur to more and more organizers that white folks had plenty more bullets than they did conscience."

Even before the march on Washington, petty jealousies and differing political perspectives divided the movement. *King* portrayed a monolithic political movement that splintered largely over Martin's anti-war position, a perspective that is at best historically dishonest. The NAACP elite and the Urban League's Whitney Young disliked Martin for years. They had condemned his increasingly activist orientation and parroted the lies of the Johnson administration on the Vietnam fiasco. The left wing of the movement, SNCC and many members of CORE referred to King as "De Lawd," a "conservative militant" at best. Writing in 1965, historian August Meier observed: "In a movement in which successful leaders are those who share in the hardships of their followers, in the risks they take, in the beatings they receive, in the length of time they spend in jail, King tends to leave prison for other engagements."

King's central character does not grow as the real Martin did after 1966. Martin's rejection of America's involvement in Vietnam was only part of his larger awareness of economic problems, of the need to develop a democratic socialist agenda for Americans. His Poor People's Campaign symbolized these issues.

In the end, *King* fails to do justice to the monumental figure of Martin Luther King.

Manning Marable is chairperson of the Department of Political Science, Tuskegee Institute, Ala., and an associate fellow of the Institute of the Black World, Atlanta.



Staughton Lynd

Labor and the law

The law: shield or a two-way sword?



I have felt since before his inauguration that Jimmy Carter's moment of truth with the labor movement would be the coal strike of 1977-78.

His intervention once again brings working people face to face with the role of the state. Economic oppression makes people militant. Government suppression makes them radicals. It is not we, with our columns and books and speeches, who convince working people of the necessity of socialism. What convinces them is when the state, to which they had looked for justice and fairness, smashes them instead.

This is an old story. Marx described the process in *The Communist Manifesto*. Alan Dawley speaks of it in his new book, *Class and Community: The Industrial Revolution in Lynn*:

[T]he history of Lynn between 1860 and 1890 contradicts [the axiom that history does not repeat itself], because a certain sequence of events that occurred first in 1860 recurred with uncanny similarity in 1878 and again in 1890, giving the researcher reading the local newspaper a strong feeling of déjà vu. Each time there were three steps in the sequence: (1) a strike occurred, (2) bringing out the police, (3) causing the strikers to mount a political campaign to unseat the incumbent officials and dismiss the police chief.

Similarly it was Eugene Debs' experience in the 1894 Pullman strike, when a former railroad lawyer serving as U.S. Attorney General sent in federal troops, that made Debs a socialist.

A person like myself, making a living as a lawyer, and a newspaper like IN THESE TIMES, with its emphasis on electoral politics, should be very much challenged by such events. For do we not, by leading

people to believe that they can use the state apparatus, mislead them *strategically* even when we achieve *tactical* victories?

With this problem in mind it is interesting to look also at the Labor Reform Act now before Congress. Viewed from one angle, it is obviously a progressive measure. If enacted, unions will find it easier to organize in the South. And if Southern wage rates rise industries will think a second time before running away from the Northeast.

But from another angle, is it in the long-run interest of working people for the federal government to supervise their affairs ever more comprehensively? Given the structure of power in the society even progressive legislation tends to be diverted from the intent of its sponsors. This has begun even before the Labor Reform Act is approved. For instance, as attorney Robert Gibbs of Seattle warns, the so-called "good" version of the bill passed by the House of Representatives contains an amendment apparently agreed to by the AFL-CIO that gives an employer or the NLRB authority to seek an injunction restraining anyone from "inducing or encouraging" an employee to violate a no-strike clause. This would destroy the effectiveness of mineworker "roving pickets." It is the statutory equivalent of restrictive contract language sought by the operators in the coal strike.

Indeed, the National Relations Act itself is not the self-evidently progressive measure it is often portrayed as. When it was first introduced in 1934 the Communist party and the ACLU opposed it. Even in its amended 1935 form, it was bitterly fought by the NAACP and the Urban League.

Herbert Hill explains why in his recently-published *Black Labor and the American Legal System*. Blacks had had an unhappy experience with the Wagner Act's predecessor, the National Recovery Administration. The NRA excluded agricultural and domestic work, which meant excluding 70 percent of the black labor force. The one black employee of the NRA was fired when she insisted on personally investigating code violations in the South.

Hence when Sen. Wagner proposed his National Labor Relations Act civil rights groups insisted on an anti-discrimination clause. Leon Keyserling, Wagner's secretary, wrote Walter White of the NAACP that the Senator originally intended to include such a clause but had dropped it because of AFL opposition. White wired the President: "We rely on you to prevent sacrifice of Negro to Jim Crow unionism." FDR signed the bill anyway. The result, in Hill's words, is that:

Neither the National Labor Relations Act nor the Railway Labor Act contained provisions for the protection of minority interests from the rule of the majority; neither specifically prohibited racial discrimination in employment; and neither contained express provisions requiring unions to represent their constituents fairly in negotiating and executing bargaining agreements.

Citing Max Weber and C. Wright Mills, Hill argues that black organizations correctly anticipated that the effects of increased government regulations of collective bargaining would be to legitimize and protect, not to extirpate, the racist practices of American unions.

As a lawyer, I try to honor the maxim that the law is a shield, not a sword. You

can win tactical victories in court. You can protect people who are trying to change the society in other ways, as by getting the striker's job back, or vindicating the woman who seeks to equalize wages. But I think Ralph Nader misleads people in suggesting that law suits can make fundamental changes.

The miners, as I see it, are right to rely on their own strike power. One reason Arnold Miller has become so out of touch with the membership may be that his election came about through court victories, and was supervised by federal marshals. Perhaps the Miller tragedy is that when push comes to shove he looks for help to the government, not to the rank and file.

Staughton Lynd, a longtime civil rights and antiwar activist, practices law in Youngstown, Ohio. He and Alice Lynd edited Rank and File, Personal Histories by Working-Class Organizers. His address is 1694 Timber Court, Niles, OH 44446.

Solution to last week's puzzle:

A	M	A	H	H	A	S	J	O	S	E	P	H
T	I	T	O	A	L	I	O	S	W	A	L	D
M	A	L	C	O	L	M	X	S	T	A	T	U
				H	A	L	S	B	E	E	R	
C	H	A	I	R	S	S	U	M	M	I	N	K
H	A	R	M	S	S	U	S	A	N	Z	O	E
E	T	U	I	W	I	N	R	O	P	I	N	G
				N	E	O	N	E	T	R	E	
J	E	T	H	R	O	L	A	I	K	U	R	E
O	R	O	A	D	D	E	R	F	I	D	E	L
B	R	I	M	S	A	T	M	U	N	I	T	Y
				O	A	T	S	B	O	R	G	
A	P	U	L	S	E	K	A	R	L	M	A	R
G	A	N	D	H	I	T	R	A	A	M	O	I
A	R	I	S	E	N	M	E	L	N	I	S	I

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Eurocommunism & The State

IN THESE TIMES Chicago Associates will sponsor a lecture-discussion class based on "Eurocommunism and the State" by Santiago Carrillo, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain. The class will examine the policies and implications of Eurocommunism as they pertain to developed capitalist countries, especially the United States.

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LIFE IN THE U.S.

Can there be a New Deal for the old?

By Dave Wood

MINNEAPOLIS

MARSHALL FIELD'S, J.L. Hudson's, Macy's—actress Ruth Gordon calls them “palaces of dreams.” Like most large cities, Minneapolis has a stylish department store that sells *everything*. This store, Dayton's, recently sponsored a two-day symposium on aging titled, “The Zestful Generation: Exploding the Myths of Age.”

Can myths be exploded in a corporate palace of dreams?

Yes and no. During the conference “big name” speakers, including Joan Fontaine, Edgar Bergen, Jimmy Bresslin, Sen. Frank Moss, Jesse Owens, Ruth Gordon and Ellen Goodman, did explode some of the myths of age, but at the same time they obscured some important realities.

Dr. William Masters (of Masters and Johnson) did an excellent job of exploding the myth of senior sexlessness. He told the audience of 1,200 that sexuality is lifelong.

Male babies have erections and female babies lubricate within their first 24 hours of life. Regardless of age, men continue to have erections and women continue to lubricate every 80-90 minutes while asleep if they are in normal health. With age, it takes a little longer to reach these aroused states but, yes Virginia, there is sex after 60—and 70 and 80 and 90.

A number of speakers demolished the myth that there is any good reason for mandatory retirement at age 65. Hoyt Catlin, 87, said that 71 is the average age of workers at the manufacturing company he started in 1956 to prove that older workers are productive workers. A Connecticut study found that the company is one of the most efficient small businesses in the state.

The vigor of speakers in their 70s and 80s laid to rest the myth that age and decrepitude are synonymous. A moving performance by the Free Street Too Theatre Company, which is composed of people aged 65-80, was especially persuasive in this regard.

The explosion of these ageist myths is significant for both the now-old and those of us who are relatively young.



Even Ruth Gordon (left) and Maggie Kuhn (above) couldn't bring reality to the “dream house.”

However, certain important realities did not filter through the perfumed air of Dayton's dream palace to the eighth-floor auditorium where the conference was held.

No one noted the scarcity of minorities at the conference except Jesse Owens who commented ironically: “I saw some of my black brothers and sisters here earlier today. Thank you for inviting us to add a little color to the meeting.”

And no one lamented the absence of older people whose impaired mobility or shame at being seen using a walker or a wheel chair prevented them from attending this conference on aging.

Maggie Kuhn, national convenor of the Gray Panthers, was the only speaker who discussed illness at length. She said that chronic arthritis has made her forefingers practically useless. “I once hid them,” she said, shaking an emphatic finger at the audience. “Now I use them as a criticism of a society that doesn't know how to heal one of the most common diseases.”

Kuhn spoke on behalf of the Dellums

Health Care bill, which she called “the socialized medicine bill.” The military, the president and his family already have socialized medicine, she said, and “if it's good enough for the president, it's good enough for us.”

Poverty among older Americans was another harsh reality that was neglected by most of the conference's 14 speakers. This is a serious omission since one-third of all people over 65 live at or below the federal poverty line, and many experts feel the actual number who live in poverty is at least double the official figure.

Sen. Frank Church did outline what sounded like a New Deal for the old. He called for the elimination of poverty among older Americans, an improved financial base for Social Security, a national health care system and affordable, acceptable housing.

These are certainly some of the major problems which a prosperous, humane society would deal with, but Sen. Church did not explain how a society that fails to provide jobs and a decent standard of living

for a large percentage of its younger citizens could show much concern for the old.

Sen. Church's failure to understand the connection between the problems of the old and those of the young was shared by almost all of the speakers. Only Studs Terkel and Maggie Kuhn clearly enunciated this connection. “The dilemma of the old is related to that of all the other outsiders,” said Terkel. “If all the outsiders got together, they are a majority.” The Gray Panther leader emphasized that her concern is not limited to the old. “I'm not interested in Brownie points for old people. I'll never wear a senior power button. I'm interested in using what energy I have left for the larger public interest.”

Mandatory retirement and the myths of senior sexlessness and decrepitude can apparently be addressed even in a corporate dream palace. But the special needs of older people who are non-white, poor or sick and the connections between the problems of the old and those of the young will have to be dealt with beyond the palace walls. ■

Dave Wood is a writer in Minneapolis.

Mothers

Continued from page 24.

in trucks,” she explains, “always something about trucks. First it was driving them, local delivery, then for a while fixing them, then even selling them, but he *really* couldn't stand that. What Steve likes best of all is drinking beer with his buddies. And that's okay with me...he's really good at it. I'm serious; it's the only time he looks happy, not hung up about something or bored... But I just don't see why all this qualifies him to be a more fit parent than me.”

Deirdre says she made the mistake of telling him about her new lesbianism. He had always told her about his affairs with other women; she decided she would tell him about her first affair with another woman. Honesty between them had always been “the one thing we had going for us. But then about a week later he said he was going to use that to get the kids away; he didn't think it was right that they would be brought up by a lesbian.”

Steve had never spent much time with the kids, Deirdre says. “He gave me orders and I carried them out. He could never bring them up by himself. He'd get some other woman, though he doesn't have a steady one now; he's in a ‘more the merrier’ phase.”

Sex, love and children.

We got on to sex and love at this point. They allowed that they had a good sex life between them—but that they also had enjoyed sex with their husbands. The real problem was that “we just felt so lonely with them after a while. Neither one was that interested in kids or anything we were interested in...like the women's movement or even just going to the movies.”

“The biggest reason why it makes sense for us to make a home together, with all our kids together, is that we're real interested in our kids. It's such an amazing lift to have someone else around who really knows what it's like.”

Susie said that Hank also knew about her lesbianism. “At first he threatened to take them away but then he had full responsibility for them for a couple of months while I took this trip to California I'd always wanted to, and we all let the dust settle. When I came back, he said, ‘You can have 'em so long as I can see 'em once a week.’ He said I was their mother and he knew I was a good mother. I know he likes his peace and quiet after a day's work too much ever to want the responsibility.”

The non-involvement, irresponsibility and/or inability in relation to childraising shown by the fathers in Susie and Deirdre's cases is common. Though some men are coming to play more active roles in childraising, most men do not have primary responsibility for the actual work

of raising children.

A great many mothers, lesbian or not, willingly or not, do and will continue to do this work, even though society gives it none of the tangible rewards given to workers on jobs (e.g., money and the respectability of being money-earners). It is probably the thing, along with wage differentials, that makes the actual lives of many men distant and unshared from the actual lives of so many women.

The anonymous East Coast lawyer says that many men who initiate custody cases do not intend to take active child-rearing responsibility, or at least, do not end up taking it. Good intentions may be behind the suits in some cases, but “often it's revenge against their insulted manhood, that's about as far as they've thought it out. Sometimes they send the kids to their mother, sometimes away to a boarding school, even when it's real young kids.” What the judge who awards custody to such fathers is usually saying then—since the men won't be doing the actual work—is that any woman who does it will be better than the natural mother if she is a lesbian.

Sexual identity.

In the Best Interest of the Children (available from Iris Films, Box 5353, Berkeley, CA 90026), shows mothers and children in eight lesbian-headed families of various socio-economic backgrounds, including some who are poor, and several who are

black. The children are all clearly growing up alive and well, even though they may have some problems the same way children of straight parents do.

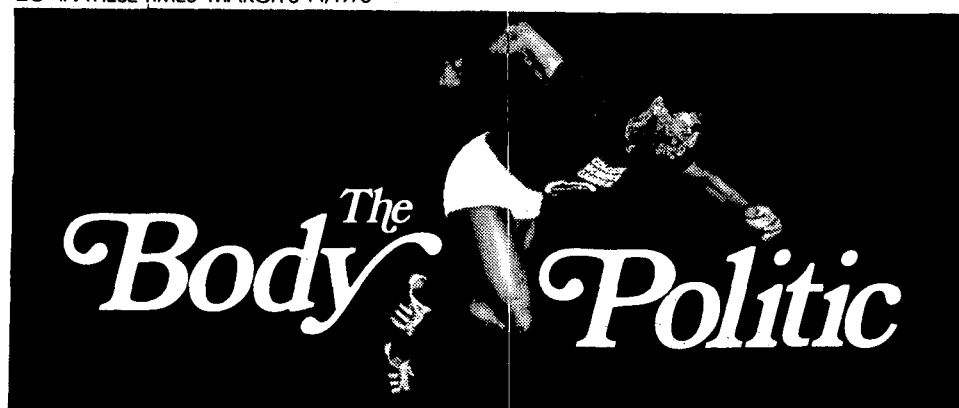
Clearly some have experienced worry about their mothers' sudden pariah status—all the older ones knew about their mothers' sexual preference (unlike Deirdre's and Susie's, who were being introduced to it only indirectly, because of the pending custody case). Yet there had been mitigating factors, as well. “I saw my mom being happier and it made me happier,” said one child.

One question of great interest to judges, whether children of either sex will automatically take on their mothers' homosexuality, is answered succinctly in the film by a teenage girl: “I've been a boy watcher from the word go.”

This aspect has apparently been critical in several cases. Fortunately for lesbian mothers, expert testimony can be found to strongly suggest that sexual identity is virtually formed in a child by the age of three. One such witness is Dr. Richard Green, a psychologist, who has testified at several cases where custody was awarded to a lesbian mother.

Green is working on a study in which he interviewed the children of 21 homosexuals and 17 transsexuals. Though the results are not in published form as of yet, they indicate, according to Green, that *none* of the children shows confusion

Continued on page 21.



By Anita Diamant

"Women are better sports than men."

It's an old and loaded cliché—or compliment or condescension—and it's full of the differences between women's experience and the basically male culture of sports.

As a rule women don't grow up learning the subtle games of sports—pushing to the limit of the foul or the dirty play, taking the calculated risk of getting caught and losing some ground, the percentage shots and the petty larcenies on and off the field / court / ice that improve the "chances."

Little boys grow up in groups called "teams" and learn early on how to measure up and jockey for position and steal and shine.

Little girls grow up one at a time, or at most paired into "best friends"—a prototype of a later male "one-and-only." Little girls are more single-minded in their social relationships. And much more verbal.

Little boys relate to sports and to the world adversarially—in terms of physical defense and offense; giving in order to take.

Little girls learn to give, to smile, to respond, to recline and take it.

It is therefore no wonder that women approach sports differently than men: with no tradition of team-relationships, no history of judgment on the basis of actions only—no appearance or image or "essence." So whenever a woman lifts a racket, throws a curve or breaks another barrier, she raises fundamental questions about sport. Because of her exclusion, because of her not-male, not "norm"-al reactions, she brings an outsider's perspective to the forbidden fruits (and locker rooms) of the games she plays.

How do women relate to winning and losing, to the pressures of competition, to the hierarchies of talent, persistence and drive? The questions mount up as the numbers of women playing everything from softball to squash increase.

From the 1890s on, comparisons between women's and men's sports have conveyed the moral superiority of sports-women. People are still arguing that women can civilize sport by replacing the worship of brute strength and size with a more reasoned respect for agility and grace.

That's an argument straight out of the biological determinism school. And, while pedestals may keep your feet clean, they also lead to atrophied muscles.

Nevertheless, women do approach their games with less of the negative intensity of

so many manhood displays and contests on streetcorners and network TV. At this point in time women athletes are so dependent on a relatively small pool of like-minded people (teammates and competitors alike) that good-sports-like conduct is rampant. And that seems to hold for the handful of professional women athletes—at least to some extent.

All the sports clichés about playing to play and not to win live on in women's games, without the underlying bitterness that a couple of years in a competitive Little League can leave in your mouth. Without memories of sadistic ex-Marine gym teachers and coaches.

For men, not playing undermines manhood. But for women, playing at all (much less taking it seriously) lays your femininity on the line. In fact, physical incompetence even heightens certain aspects of the mystique.

So if women are somewhat less combative on the floor, somewhat faster to congratulate the winning team, more polite to officials and opponents, it's not necessarily the result of moral superiority—or of choice.

If there is a women's sports ethic now, it includes caring for teammates and competitors, an emphasis on the process of playing rather than on the "product" of winning, and an insistence on fun.

But women's sports ethics such as they are exist pretty much by default. If we want to keep the edge out of our cheers and maintain the joy of the games we take seriously, we need to selectively defend our "otherness" without being smug or apologetic. In any event it's time to start discussing and deciding what we want from sports, and what we don't need.

The experts predict the coming commercial success of women's sports—from lacrosse to baseball. But if and when money enters the picture, all the prevailing good-sport-woman-ship might well go the way of the hoop skirt and the athletic scholarship.

Women athletes and athletic associations are faced with a number of decisions about women's sports. The rip-off has begun and the pressure to conform to the "standards" of male sports culture is powerful and persuasive.

There is, however, in the practice of women's sports, a moment that negates the constricting limits of femininity. That feeling of liberation is powerful. Let's not just trade it in for another set of chains.

Anita Diamant writes frequently for IN THESE TIMES.

Protests mount over Nashville Davis matches

By Craig T. Canan

NASHVILLE

INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION IS FOCUSING on Vanderbilt University here as opposition to the participation of South Africa in the March 17-19 Davis Cup tennis tournament builds. Vanderbilt is hosting the competition between the U.S. and South Africa with the endorsement of the United States Tennis Association.

Benjamin L. Hooks, executive director of the NAACP, predicts that the appearance of the South Africans will result in the "biggest demonstration in this country since the '60s."

The main protest is a mass march and

rally to be held on Saturday, March 18, the second day of the three-day event. A first day builder rally will be held by students at the site of the matches on the 17th.

The national mobilization is being coordinated by the ad hoc Coalition for Human Rights in South Africa, which includes the NAACP and the American Coordinating Committee For Equality in Sport and Society (ACCESS), as well as other major civil rights groups.

The Tennessee Coalition Against Apartheid (TCAA) and the Student Coordinating Committee of Nashville are working with the national groups in coordinating the Nashville protests.

Support for the protests has also come

from some of the tennis players themselves. Ray Moore, South Africa's most prominent tennis pro, has announced that he will boycott the matches. He hopes South Africa will withdraw voluntarily. A frequent critic of apartheid, Moore hopes his outspoken views are "a thorn in the side of the government."

Arthur Ashe, the only black international tennis star, has reportedly withdrawn from the tournament in protest. Ashe has in the past supported increased competition between the U.S. and South Africa and crossed its color line by being the first black to compete in a major tennis tournament in South Africa.

John Pike, national coordinator of the Progressive Action Coalition and chair of the Student Coordinating Committee, stresses that it is not simply a tennis match that is being protested. "People are realizing that Vanderbilt is not insisting on hosting the competition merely to allow for an open forum. The open-forum defense is a smokescreen designed to de-emphasize Vanderbilt's stock investments in South Africa. The concept of the open forum is not valid in this instance because the racist South Africans will not openly state or discuss their viewpoint and are using the facade of a sports event for propaganda. The South Africans hope that people will see Vanderbilt's hosting of the tennis matches as acceptance of the apartheid system in South Africa."

The PAC analyzed a 1977 Vanderbilt financial report and announced that "the university has a substantial financial stake in South Africa since 25 percent of their endowment income is derived from corporations which are involved in South Africa." The report indicates that Vanderbilt received over \$1.4 million from investments in these 31 corporations during the last fiscal year.

Thus far the controversy has forced NLT Corp. to withdraw as financial backer of the Davis Cup. NLT, whose hold-

ings include National Life and Accident Insurance Co. and the Grand Old Opry, had agreed to pay losses up to \$88,000. Other backing has reportedly been found, however, and Vanderbilt president Emmett Fields says the university still plans to go through with hosting the matches.

In a related development, ACCESS chairperson Dr. Richard Lapchick was brutally beaten and cut after spending several days in Nashville helping to organize the protests. Dr. Lapchick was assaulted in his office at Virginia Wesleyan College when two masked white men forced their way into his office. They beat him with a wooden statue, called him a "nigger lover," and told him "you have no business being involved in South Africa's business." They then carved the letters "N-I-G-E-R" on his stomach with a pair of scissors and overturned a metal filing cabinet on him. He was hospitalized because of his injuries and doctors say may require an operation for a hernia received during the attack.

Lapchick says, however, that the attack strengthened his determination to work against the racist apartheid government of South Africa.

To help in the Davis Cup Protest contact TCAA, P.O. Box 24141, Nashville, TN 37202, or ACCESS, c/o Virginia Wesleyan College, Norfolk, VA 23502.

A "Conference on International Sport, Politics and Racism," scheduled March 10-12, has now been shifted from Northwestern University in Chicago to Meharry Medical College in Nashville. Topics such as the role of multinational corporations in South African sport and the international and national movement against apartheid will be discussed. For more information on the conference write Non-Racial Olympic Committee, 624 Clark St., Evanston, IL 60201.

Craig T. Canan is a warehouseman and free-lance writer in Nashville.

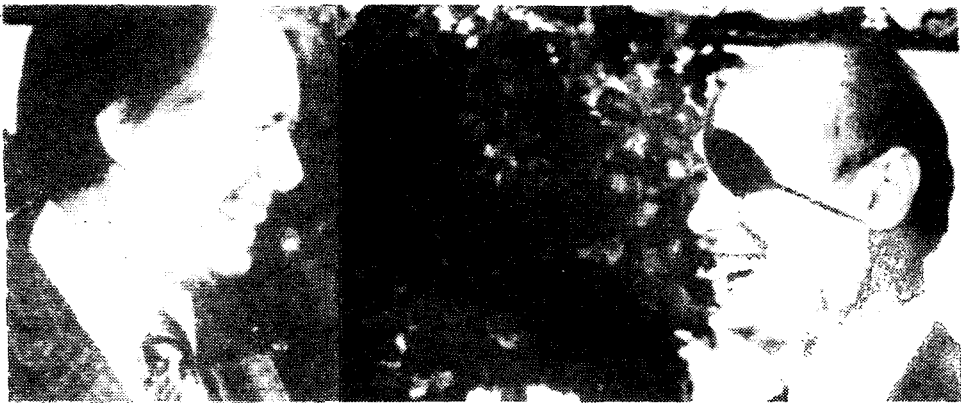
SPORTS QUIZ

What Do You Know About Women and Sports?

By Stephanie Twin

1. What is the only sport in which women have numerical parity with men?
2. The first women's intercollegiate basketball game was in what year and between what two schools?
3. What chain-smoking, party-going, Norwegian-born masseuse won the women's national tennis title eight times between 1915 and 1926?
4. In what state is women's basketball a major spectator sport?
5. Who was the first known woman to have bested a man's record and in what sport?
6. What black female tennis player challenged USLTA champion Helen Willis (who declined) to a match?
7. According to some speculations, in what two sports does women's greater body fat make them potentially superior to men?
8. What school produced the first championship AAU team of black women, and in what sport?
9. What female tennis coach instructed Bobby Riggs, Alice Marble and Maureen Connolly, as well as numerous Hollywood stars?
10. Who were the Golden Cyclones and who was their most illustrious player?
11. What female tennis player competed in a Forest Hills championship match 21 years after her first win?
12. What contemporary scholar has called women "truncated males" who should only be permitted to play sports in "foreshortened versions"?
13. What bicycle enthusiast called a tweed skirt and blouse, "the skirt three inches from the ground," and "walking shoes with gaiters" a modest, sensible riding outfit for women?
14. According to a 1975 Guinness publication, what athlete has amassed the greatest single fortune in sport?
15. When did American women first participate in the Olympics?
16. What athletic organization was the first to successfully use the crawl stroke in racing?
17. What athlete broke the color barrier in tennis?
18. When did the AAU begin listing women's records?
19. What competitive female baseball player pitched to Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig?
20. When did the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women begin allowing women to accept athletic scholarships?
21. According to sports encyclopedist Frank Menke, what were the first and second most widely-played sports among women in the 1930s?

Answers: 1. Roller derby; 2. 1896, Stanford and the University of California (Berkeley); 3. Molla Bjurstedt Mallory; 4. Iowa; 5. Sybil Bauer, swimming (1922); 6. Ora Washington; 7. Swimming and cross-country running; 8. Tuskegee, track and field (1937-1944); 9. Eleanor Tennant; 10. The championship AAU women's basketball team of the Employers' Casualty Company of Dallas, between 1925 and 1933. Babe Didrickson; 11. May Sutton Bundy; 12. Philosopher Paul Weiss; 13. Temperance leader Frances Willard; 14. Sonja Henie; 15. 1920; 16. Women's Swimming Association of New York (1920 Olympics); 17. Althea Gibson (1950); 18. 1917; 19. Jackie Mitchell; 20. 1973; 21. First, basketball; second, swimming.



PLO holds out

Continued from page 8.

tion, which was formalized at the Tripoli Conference. Although the formation of this "Steadfastness Front" was instigated by the Egyptian initiative, it is emerging as a rejectionist response to what is viewed by many as an attempt to create an alliance of pro-West regimes stretching from West Africa and the Middle East to the Horn of Africa and Iran—an alliance among nations hostile to Soviet-supplied, revisionist regimes.

The PLO leadership is threatening a strategic realignment of the Arab world into two opposing blocs. One bloc would be headed by Egypt, which has abandoned Arab unity in pursuit of an alliance with the West. The other would include Syria, the PLO, Iraq, Libya, Algeria, and South Yemen, who—with aid from the USSR—will work to destabilize "reactionary" states in the area. Although an interesting proposition, the importance of such thinking at this stage of the Middle East debate it must be remembered that as yet Egypt has made no substantive (land, sovereignty) concessions closing the door to Arab reconciliation—is its appearance among PLO moderates, which has long resisted Rejectionist attempts to impose such an outlook as a guide to political action.

Rejectionists win moderates.

On two important issues—the utility of negotiations and the role of the U.S. in mediating a settlement—moderate members of the PLO appear to have concluded that the Rejectionist line has been vindicated. Jiryis explained this new mood among moderates: "The moderate group is emerging with the main body of the PLO. The Rejectionists were right in their suspicions of an American imperialist-Zionist-Arab reactionary alliance. They always tried to warn us of this. Our aims were not different. We were more optimistic about the future of negotiations. Now that isn't so."

"The Rejectionists accepted our two-state formula. We have accepted the other notion—to try to do this by force. What Sadat is getting from the Israelis makes us more sure of this."

"Sadat did something good. He dispelled our illusions. Perhaps if he hadn't gone to Jerusalem, Geneva would have

been reconvened and dragged on forever. Now the path is clear."

"In the end, however, there is a need for negotiations. If you are weak and negotiate it is useless. If you want something from the Israelis you must know how to talk on the one side and how to apply pressure on the other. The same applied to the U.S. If the U.S. does not feel U.S. interests are at stake, it won't feel compelled to move."

"American interests are in danger, not from the Palestinians or the PLO, but from the PLO trend in the Arab world. Capitalists are cowards. They need stability to make profits. It's almost certain that they won't get it."

"Our experience with the West has been long and bitter. We shouldn't trust the U.S. very much. Some changes occurred in the first nine months of 1977. The Carter administration accepted many ideas of past administrations but tried to adopt new methods regarding the Palestinian question, as long as they did not jeopardize existing U.S. interests. Now their position is the same as before. Let's be realistic. We can't let our future be connected with an unsophisticated and cowardly American administration. With everyone else it's a problem of interests. With us, it's a problem of existence."

Many in the PLO now believe that the Rejectionist avenue of political action must be explored since negotiation as an avenue to settlement is not now possible. However, as politicians they realize the need to keep all options credible, including that of negotiation. PLO chairman Arafat's well-publicized recent talks in Damascus with U.S. congressmen demonstrate PLO attempts to maintain the diplomatic middle ground in the current uncertainty.

An impression is left of a sort of confusing flexibility in PLO policy. The PLO is not alone in adopting such a position. The key to survival in the Middle East is the ability, in the absence of an overwhelming capacity to impose one's will, to keep one's options open. The PLO, although working to frustrate the current diplomatic initiative, has not renounced the diplomatic options.

Geoffrey Aronson recently returned from Lebanon.

Neighborhood women

Continued from page 5.

homemaker's undervalued role.

In the discussion that followed a young woman who said that she lives with her boyfriend and believes that boys should be raised to feel responsible for housework was clearly in the minority. Most of the women saw housework as a female responsibility that was secondary to child-rearing. NCNW activist Marie Cassella affirmed her opposition to household wages and proudly recounted how she had once said so at a conference of feminist academicians. Another speaker drew applause when she proposed a housewives' union that would offer women such fringe benefits as vacation trips they couldn't afford.

The speakout is a method that NCNW frequently employs to draw out women in the community. In December 1976 a speakout on wife-beating attracted 150 women, according to Reed, who is chairperson of the board of the Center for the Elimination of Violence in the Family—the battered women's shelter that NCNW and the YWCA jointly opened last March.

Obscured by the community's perception of itself as a "nice area where no violence occurred," wife beating was an issue that NCNW had not anticipated. Kowalsky recalls how obviously battered staff members showed up for work, while she and other non-battered staff members became aware that some of their friends and relatives were victims of beatings. The idea of a shelter was thus conceived.

Reed recalls the pitiful stories told at the speakout three months before the shelter's opening. One woman described how she was beaten by both her husband and her kids.

Generational differences.

Generational differences are apparent among NCNW activists, however. The younger women are better educated and more open to the personal autonomy issues that their older co-workers minimize for religious or class reasons. Reed, who is 25, feels comfortable calling herself a feminist, whereas Kowalsky and Giordano don't.

Kowalsky doesn't even particularly like the term "working-class." My husband wasn't a factory worker, he was a white collar worker, so what class does that make him?" she explains. Generally, she feels that an income of less than \$20,000 is working-class but acknowledges that many professionals are within that salary range.

"We are the people who really run neighborhoods, who run the country," Kowalsky says of working-class people, especially the women. However, she has come to view volunteerism as female exploitation because "When you demand a salary, they'll say you're not qualified."

By contrast, Reed feels that because of their volunteer activities working-class women have more constructive, if fewer, community outlets than do men. Similarly, Giordano and Noschese call volunteerism "community work" and see it as an essential aspect of life, something that enhances women's sense of themselves as contributors. The NCNW is working toward the same end, they feel.

The fact that it is doing so from a left-wing perspective suggests that tradition-oriented, working-class communities become fertile territory for the "new right" only by default.

Stephanie Twin is a writer in Brooklyn.

Lesbian mothers

Continued from page 19.

ion of sexual identity, and that all old enough to express a sexual preference, expressed a preference for heterosexuality.

Other studies are in the works on the legal and psychological questions involved. One, by Mildred Pagelow, compared lesbian mothers with "non-pathological" single heterosexual mothers. She found that both groups shared and adapted to similar problems. The lesbian mothers had some additional ones, but often demonstrated greater resourcefulness than the heterosexual mothers.

Another study, by Kirkpatrick, Roy and Smith, done at UCLA, was cited in the journal *Human Behavior* in 1976. Studying 200 children between the ages of five and 12 in single-parent lesbian-headed families, the researchers concluded that the problems of the children were typical of those from divorced homes. There were, again, no gender identity problems.

The National Institute of Mental Health

is funding a study being conducted by Dr. Jane Mandel, a psychologist, and colleagues. They are interviewing the children of over 100 carefully matched families, half the children of lesbian mothers, half with heterosexual mothers. They are looking at the psycho-social development of the children in their preadolescent years, then hope to follow it up and look at the same children in their adolescent years. Dr. Mandel says that the results will not be available for another two years.

Iris films has prepared a booklet that summarizes the scanty but growing body of serious work being done on the psychological and legal aspects.

A group in Seattle, the Lesbian Mothers National Defense Fund (2446 Lorentz Place North, Seattle, WA 98109), provides "legal, emotional and financial support to lesbian mothers threatened with or in the midst of custody battles." They have literature available, as well, as do more and more women's groups.

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In These Times sustainer drive begins

"WE'VE GOT A LONG row to hoe, but with the help of our readers there's no question about the harvest," So spoke Nick Rabkin, IN THESE



TIMES' general manager, in announcing the beginning of a sustainers campaign among readers of the paper.

"We have to raise a lot of money this year," said Rabkin. "Less than last year, but still more than \$125,000 over the year. And we're suffering from a terrible cash problem right now. Much of our income is being plowed back into promotion to assure our future. The result is a growing debt to free-lance correspondents and artists and late paychecks for the staff."

"The sustainer program is designed to give us a cushion when we hit these cash flow difficulties—which will arise from time to time until we have established ourselves as a major publication. There are lots of people around who can't afford to send us \$100 in a lump, but who could send \$10 to \$20 a month. We need donations in large amounts, it's true. But socialism won't be made by angels. It will take people—lots of them—contributing what they can to do it. That's what the sustainer program is all about."

Rabkin expressed confidence that the paper would quickly reach its initial goal of 100 sustainers at an average of \$15 a month. (A coupon to become a sustainer is provided on this page.) "We have a commitment to our writers, artists and staff, and I'm sure that it is shared by many of our readers."

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ART «» ENTERTAINMENT

BOOKS

The new East German women

GUTEN MORGEN, DU
SCHOENE (Good-Morning,
My Beauty)
Maxie Wander
Der Morgen Publishers, Berlin,
1977

The biggest literary happening in the German Democratic Republic in years is a book that was talked, not written—although only a writer and one with extraordinary perceptions could have put it together.

It was a first book. Maxie Wander, a Viennese who had lived in the GDR for 20 of her 40-odd years, won the confidence of 19 persons of all ages who had two things in common: they were women and citizens of the GDR. To her they entrusted their private thoughts about love and socialism, parents, children, the school system, emancipation, responsibility, thoughts they had never completely unrolled for themselves. You can tell by the way it comes out that they were hearing themselves for the first time.

The picture that emerges is of a special kind of emancipation process that, for widely varying reasons, couldn't take place in West Germany, the U.S., England or the Soviet Union. These women are an historical phenomenon. They live in a paradoxical situation: plenty of the traditional troubles with men, but equal opportunities and equal pay. The GDR woman did not get these things by demonstrating. They were handed to her on a silver platter. But now that she has them, she is quickly indignant if anyone—a husband, say—tried to prevent her enjoying them.

Socialist Germany, which could not have been built without the protection of the Soviet Union, guarantees a degree of sexual equality still unknown to the mass of Soviet women. An expanding economy with a perennial labor shortage entices her out of the household, at the same time admonishing males in a

They are very articulate about the problems of Early Socialism.

never-ending barrage not merely to "help" at home, but really pull their weight. Over 80 percent of the able-bodied women work, and the rising divorce rate (26.7 to 10,000 marriages in 1976) reflects the refusal of GDR women to accept the double shift. It is usually they who initiate the divorce proceedings.

So with no revolution and virtually no tradition of a woman's movement behind them, these women who get the pill and abortion and education free have developed into human beings willing and eager to use their brains and very articulate about the problems Early Socialism hasn't solved.

The reader of *Good-Morning, My Beauty* is accustomed to published interviews that gloss over anything controversial and to the Happiness Faces that smile up out of all official reports. He feels the top of his head coming off. "So that's what's going on in people's heads. But how did it get published?" As for example, when Barbara comments about a former school friend, "Now she's fat and has kids and is always sitting in front of the television set and joined the Party, completely respectable..."

Rosi, the curtain-raiser, lets off steam about everything. "This business of standing at attention in school, this superficial, senseless discipline, call to the colors, eyes left, eyes right. What has that got to do with socialism? It makes me completely sick. I felt raped by it. You know there are parents who with the best intentions advise their kids to play along and not stick their necks out. That's irresponsible." She complains about the alien-

ation of neighbors in a new high-rise, about the inadequacy of anti-pollution measures, about hypocrisy on various fronts. "Oh yes, our socialist conformism! How is a society supposed to progress if it stops questioning, does not want to change anything, avoids risks? We might as well have taken over God, the Father, and the dogmas of our grand-parents."

It is also Rosi, an executive secretary, married, about 30, with one child, who says: "I do go to bed with another man now and then, or in the bushes. So you may ask, why does she export her sexuality when she has it so good at home? I don't know, I really don't know. I just don't know why I shouldn't sleep with them."

Tame as this admission may sound to Americans, it has to be understood in the context of socialist propriety. Here government members are never even photographed with their families, as if such connections might suggest a lack of monolithicism. At the opposite extreme you get blatant, yet puerile sex films, made apparently to prove that nothing human is alien to us. All this prudery, no matter which side of the coin it is on, is completely at odds with the natural lustiness of the Germans.

Thus the old woman, Julia, muses over golden memories of her childhood and youth in the period of Kaiser Wilhelm: "I got interested in so many different things. I miss that terribly now. Here you have nothing but politics; it's the be-all and end-all.... The youth are oriented to a goal. No, they don't know how to live anymore."

At the time of her death in November 1977, Maxie Wander had done half of the interviews for a companion volume about men. Her husband, Fred Wander, a well-known writer in the GDR, is planning to complete the work.

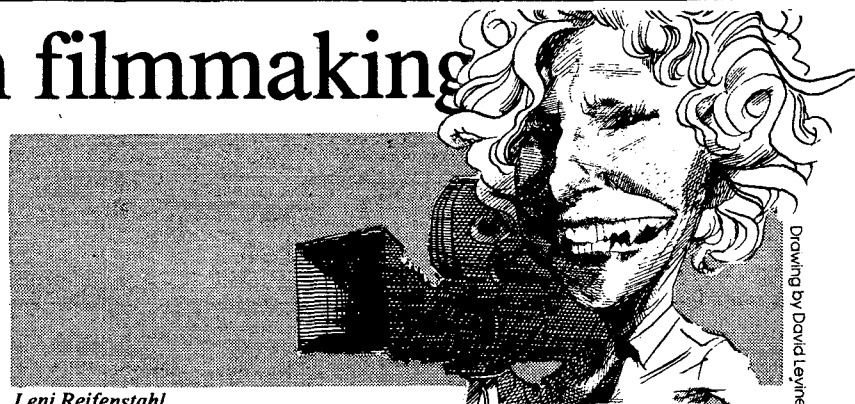
—Edith Anderson
Edith Anderson is an American-born journalist and novelist, now a citizen of the GDR.

Women in filmmaking

WOMEN AND THE CINEMA
—A Critical Anthology
Edited by Karyn Kay and Gerald Peary
Dutton, 1977, \$8.95

This is an interesting text for those concerned with the ongoing debate concerning the past, present and future roles of women in mainstream and independent cinema. Kay and Peary have carefully collected 45 articles that not only cover the diverse contributions of women as film workers, but also take into account varied opinions and insights of a wide political and aesthetic spectrum.

The anthology is divided into seven sections: actresses, history, commercial and independent production, political films, polemics and, most importantly, feminist film criticism. This last section concentrates on the work and writings of socialist and Marxist women who are determined to



Leni Reifensahl

use film as a means of re-organizing basic modes of thought and artistic production.

Women are asked to question their current roles inside and outside the film production process, in order to discover whether they have a unique contribution to make to a field of endeavor that is consistently labeled entertainment, but obviously has great power to persuade and educate.

The collection reveals the complexity of women's roles in the aesthetic process. From Susan Sontag's attacks on Leni Reifensahl ("Fascinating Fascism") to analysis of the work of directors

as diverse as Wertmuller, Ida Lupino and Alice Guy Blache [who worked in the first decade of the 20th century as a director], *Women and the Cinema* begins to address the involvement of a group of workers who have been neglected because of their sex.

This book will be of use in the classroom, and it also offers a great deal of information to anyone who wants to learn how women will have to view film in order to work and create within its confines.

—Joe Heumann
Joe Heumann teaches at Eastern Illinois University and writes frequently for IN THESE TIMES.

TELEVISION

Sixties women short-changed

LOOSE CHANGE

An adaptation for television of Sara Davidson's book
Directed by Jules Irving

Sex has been in, and violence out, in TV's 1977-78 season. But except for rare exceptions like ABC's *Family*, sex appears purely as romance or titillation.

NBC, which has plummeted to third in the race for ratings, has decided to join the sex parade. It is airing its new sexually oriented shows at women between 18 and 49 who, according to program director Fred Klein, are more interested in sexual themes than are men (*Newsweek*, Feb. 20). Its most recent effort was an adaptation of *Loose Change*, Sara Davidson's study of three women growing up in the '60s.

NBC paid Davidson \$100,000 to do what they wanted with *Loose Change*. Davidson's book is no work of genius. But NBC's adaptation manages to deprive Davidson's study of whatever fleeting glimpses it had into the cauldron of the '60s.

Davidson went to school at Berkeley in 1960. Thirteen years later, haunted by lost dreams, she set about reconstructing the '60s by recounting the lives she and two of her friends from Berkeley had led.

Davidson and her friends experienced what many college educated women did in the '60s. In seeking both a happy marriage

and meaningful work, they came up against the historic inequality between men and women.

Against this barrier, Davidson and her friends pursue different strategies—marriage, consciousness-raising, psychoanalysis, meditation—none of which quite succeed.

Davidson also captures the moment of political initiation that recurred throughout the '60s. Children brought up in the cold-war mythology of a free, benevolent America awakened with a jolt to America's racism and imperial mission. The sit-ins, shop-ins, marches, and countless petitions were as much initiation ceremonies for their participants as means of affecting the outside world.

Jules Irving and Corinne Jacker's TV adaptation robs Davidson of her feminist understanding and paints the period's politics in typical lurid colors. In the book, Susie marries a Berkeley radical and lives through him. But she experiences her lack of personal fulfillment sexually, in her inability to have an orgasm. She only discovers belatedly, after several years of women's liberation, that her sexual problems are part of a larger inability to live her own life.

On TV, women's liberation is absent. Jenny (Susie) blurts out the secret of her impotence to an encounter group, and the next thing one knows she is headed to New Mexico where she will find

sexual happiness with a Vietnam vet.

Scenes are inserted in the TV version whose only ostensible purpose is anti-feminist. Kate (Sara) is made to regret her abortion ("Why did I kill him?") to her friend Rob, a screwball in the book, but a code character for Irving and Jacker. Rob responds: "Your body, your choice, isn't that what they say. Twenty minutes in a doctor's office, and it's all over."

The tactics of the civil rights movement are exaggerated to lend them the cast of extremism. A shop-in at Lucky's in Berkeley (Three-Kay in the TV version) to protest their discriminatory hiring policies is portrayed on TV as a near-riot.

In the book, Sara was horrified by the shop-in, but she acknowledges in explaining her reaction: "The truth was...I didn't like Negroes." No such revelation occurs in the TV version.

Irving and Jacker also invent a final reunion scene, when Joe (Jeff), Kate, and Tanya (Tasha) visit Rob and Jenny at Rob's New Mexico commune. (Rob's commune, it should be mentioned, has also the conveniences of a TV executive's Malibu beach-house.) "The trouble was...we reflected the chaos, we got caught up in it ourselves," the wise Rob says as they sit around a fire.

"There is still a real world out there," the fanatical Joe asserts.



Season Hubley plays Tanya, Laurie Heineman plays Jenny, and Cristina Raines plays Kate.

But Rob has the last word. "I can't help anyone until I help myself."

In Davidson's book there are no strict divisions between personal salvation and politics; they are part of one topsy-turvy quest. But Irving and Jacker see a fork in the road, and it is clear which path they recommend.

They don't even preserve the few rough edges of ordinary life that are present in the book. In the book, the once beautiful Tasha (Tanya) becomes plain and pudgy; in the TV version, she remains as beautiful as ever.

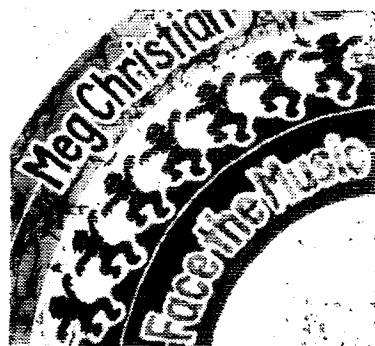
In the book the three friends part ways, unable to reconcile their friendship with their different lives and values. This was not merely an incidental feature of their lives, but was common to the flux of the '60s. Friendships, marriages didn't hold up.

But on TV their friendship is eternal. Irving and Jacker break the per minute record for reunion scenes and "I love you's."

Sara Davidson's *Loose Change* is worth reading. The TV version was not worth a dime.

—John Judis

Records



FACE THE MUSIC
Meg Christian
(Olivia Records), 1977

As a preface to one of her new songs Meg Christian writes, "For a long time my one big goal was learning to be a fine musician. Then, as my commitment to feminism grew, I started searching for good ways to use the amazing power of music to communicate feelings and ideas of real value to women. I've since been meeting more feminist musicians who're also struggling with that delicate balance of high musical quality and clear conscious-

ness. And we look to the women who listen to be critically responsive on both levels."

That is a good interpretation of Meg's second album, *Face the Music*, produced by Olivia Records, a women's recording company in Los Angeles. Listening to her, reading the messages on the album cover and inside envelope, and looking at the pictures of all the other women involved in the music, I feel they are all my good friends.

Meg Christian is not some far-off "super-star," she is a close "super-sister."

The ten new songs range from love songs to political struggle songs. Meg sings of her lovers, her life, her sisters and her cat, "Nipper." "Mountain Song" is a powerful *a capella* piece written by Holly Near that projects the strength of an Appalachian woman fighting for her land.

"The Rock Will Wear Away" (by Meg and Holly Near) is one of my favorites. It speaks to the theme that many small, weak entities can join together to defeat a larger, stronger one. The imagery is taken from a Vietnamese poem. Meg writes songs about issues which are vital to the wo-

men's movement—especially lesbianism, class, race and commonality of women's struggles everywhere.

Meg Christian's newest album, *Face the Music*, is an album to have and to play over and over again because "when you face the music and hear every string in your spirit, it will lead you on a merry dance." Meg's beautiful voice is supported by some great female vocalists such as Holly Near, Teresa Trull, and the women in "Sweet Honey in the Rock." (If any of these women ever come to your city, take my advice: Don't miss them.)

—Karen Morrill
Karen Morrill teaches in an alternative school in Chicago.

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INSIDE REPORT to and from grassroots America. WASHINGTON WATCH, 5 issues for \$2.00. Dept. IT1, 3308 Cedar, Lansing, MI 48910.

ROOT AND BRANCH—A quarterly journal from a libertarian/Marxist perspective. \$6 per year to: Root and Branch, Dept. A, P.O. Box 236, Somerville, MA 02143.

CLANDESTINE AMERICA, a newsletter on current investigation into political assassinations and secret government. \$6 a year for 6 issues. Send self-addressed envelope for free sample. Write: Assassination Information Bureau, 1322 18th St. NW, #214, Washington, DC 20036.

For a history of THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT IN AMERICA, 1961-1975, I would appreciate any and all personal reminiscences and recollections. Documentation would be helpful but not necessary. Charles DeBeneditto, Dept. of History, University of Toledo, 2801 W. Bancroft St., Toledo, OH 43602.

EMMA'S HEALTH CENTER, 1628A W. Belmont, Chicago, is now offering services in self-help clinics, pregnancy testing, abortion and birth control counseling and more by feminist paramedics on Monday evenings 7-10 and Saturday mornings 10:30-12:30. Call 528-4310 or 493-5364.

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—PERSONALS—

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Lesbian & Mother



By Jane Melnick

Most judges think we're Martian orangutans," says Diana, a lesbian mother. "Actually, I'm a better mother, I'd say, than 73.2 percent of my straight friends... My daughter is a solid citizen, brings home good grades, even likes boys. Do I think it's ideal? No, I'd have greatly preferred it if my husband hadn't been a turkey and if the society didn't turn you into a pariah if you have friends of your own sex."

The spectre of lesbian motherhood casts its shadow across questions about the family with a peculiar cutting edge. Proponents of the traditional nuclear family talk about lesbianism as if it is one of the causes of the decline. Issues about possible alternatives it offers, and light it may shed on the embattled nuclear family get lost in the maze of issues of survival, and defense against attacks from all sides.

The makers of a recent film on lesbian motherhood, *In the Bests Interests of the Children*, estimate that one lesbian in three is a mother. According to the Kinsey report, one woman in ten is lesbian. Though there is no way to tell precisely how many lesbian mothers there are, it is likely to be surprisingly high.

Examination in the courts.

The first official examination of the societal questions involved has come in the courts—through child custody cases.

A few landmark cases in recent years have awarded lesbian mothers unconditional custody of their children. But according to a lawyer on the East Coast who has worked on lesbian custody cases (some successfully), mothers who are known lesbians—or even mothers about whom innuendoes of lesbianism can be made in court—have very slim chances of winning custody of their children in court.

This lawyer, who did not wish to be

named for fear that it could be used against her in court somehow, says, "Just about the only way to win is to be white, professional, religious (preferably Protestant), and an outstanding member of the community."

I visited two lesbian mothers who are hoping to form a household together in a large East Coast suburb. Such a joint household as they plan is probably quite unusual—probably more because of what community pressures against it can be envisioned than for whatever kind of internal sense it makes.

It was a Saturday morning. The mothers, Susie and Deirdre, were sitting in the family room of Susie's home. Seven children were present; five Susie's and two Deirdre's. They ranged in age from 15 to four.

Susie and Deirdre have been lovers for almost two years. They did not want me to reveal their real names. Deirdre's husband is threatening to try to get custody of the two children on the grounds that Deirdre is a lesbian.

Deirdre's husband has a history of nervous breakdowns, drinking problems and an unsteady work record. Yet, if what happens at Deirdre's trial is similar to many lesbian mother custody cases, her lesbianism alone may be judicial proof of unfitness.

The strongest point in Deirdre's favor is probably her steady job history and solid economic footing—a situation that is often reversed when fathers sue lesbian mothers for custody.

Deirdre's and Susie's kids watch cartoons; the older ones joke about which cartoons are the stupidest. The children are fresh-faced, eager, individual; if anything they look more open, less withdrawn, scared or mean than many children I've seen in the course of piloting my own son through eight years of various school systems. Soon Susie drives all the

To many judges anything is better than leaving a child with a lesbian.

kids over to the school to see a production of *The Wizard of Oz*.

Kids above average.

Later, I talk to the mothers about the various children. All are doing okay at school, several above average. All have friends, some more than others.

Jamie, Susie's third child, is both an excellent athlete and star pupil. Susie says all her children tended in that direction. "Well, why shouldn't they? I was an above-average reader and a pretty good athlete, and I've taught them softball and soccer and reading, so why shouldn't they be okay at these things? I only hope it will be easier for them to go to college than it was for me."

Neither Deirdre nor Susie attended college. Susie did not because she started doing clerical work right out of high school to support her dying mother. Then she married Hank, her husband, who was a cop. She now is an office manager and brings home a good salary.

Deirdre works as an auto mechanic at her older brother's Volkswagen garage. She had helped him work on cars as a teenager; they got along very well. When she complained of the boredom of work in a plastics factory—where she worked for five years—he suggested she come to work for him. She has been doing it for a year and loves it.

Deirdre's husband, Steve, the one threatening to sue for custody, "works

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